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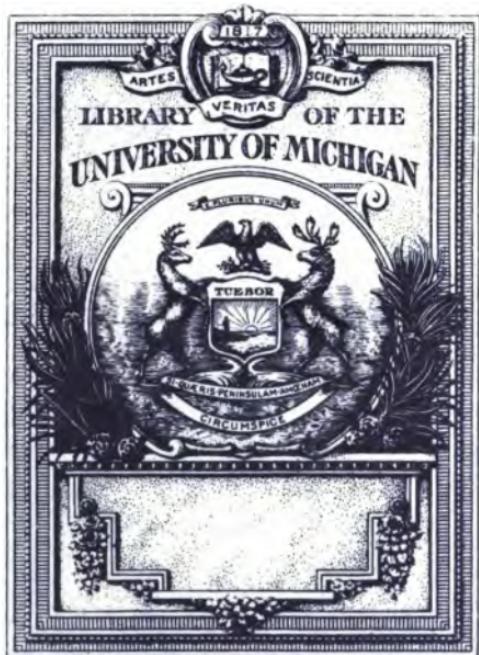
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HINTS
ADDRESSED TO
THE PATRONS AND DIRECTORS
OF
SCHOOLS ;
PRINCIPALLY INTENDED TO SHEW,
THAT THE BENEFITS DERIVED FROM THE NEW
MODES OF TEACHING MAY BE INCREASED
BY A PARTIAL ADOPTION
OF THE
PLAN OF PESTALOZZI.

TO WHICH ARE SUBJOINED
EXAMPLES
OF
QUESTIONS
CALCULATED TO EXCITE, AND EXERCISE
THE INFANT MIND.

BY
MRS ELIZABETH HAMILTON,
AUTHOR OF LETTERS ON THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF
EDUCATION, &c. &c.

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TO THE
EDINBURGH EDUCATION SOCIETY,
AS
LIBERAL AND ENLIGHTENED BENEFACTORS
OF THEIR COUNTRY,
THE FOLLOWING PAGES
ARE,
IN TESTIMONY OF A SINCERE INTEREST IN
THE SUCCESS OF THEIR PATRIOTIC
EXERTIONS,
MOST HUMBLY AND RESPECTFULLY
INSCRIBED.



REMARKS

ON

SCHOOLS.

THE question concerning the wisdom and eligibility of teaching the children of the poor to read and write, seems by general consent determined in the affirmative. A generous solicitude to extend the benefits of education to all ranks in the community, has become so universally prevalent, that considering the facilities afforded by the late improvements, it appears highly probable that, before the middle of the present century, the gates of knowledge will have

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been opened to every individual in the United Kingdoms of Great-Britain and Ireland.

The spirit that now worketh is the spirit of charity, of whose divine origin no Christian entertains a doubt. In the attention that has of late been paid to the mental as well as to the physical wants of the poor, its operations have been conspicuous; and as the pleasure of doing good is not like other pleasures attended by satiety, there is little reason to apprehend that benevolence will speedily relax in its efforts.

Of the happy consequences that will result to society from these labours of love, the most sanguine expectations may reasonably be indulged; but it is necessary to keep in our remembrance, that the fruits will not be in proportion to the fervour of our zeal, but in proportion to the wisdom with which that zeal is directed.

In the country in which I now write, the benefits of education have so long been enjoyed by the labouring classes, as to be considered in the light of a birth-right. Of the moral effects produced by this general dissemination of the means of instruction, it is needless to speak,—as they have been exhibited in the conduct of our countrymen in every quarter of the globe; bearing ample testimony to the wisdom, that, by providing for the education of all, enabled the mass of the people to participate in the blessings of intellect, and in the light of truth. What a glorious monument has thus been raised to the wisdom of our ancestors ! To their descendants it only now remains to watch with vigilance, lest the light which they took so much pains to diffuse, should, in consequence of circumstances that may obstruct its course, appear to be shorn of its beams.

If we admit, that the system of education adopted in the parochial schools at the period of their establishment, was suited to the then state of society, we must also allow, that in so far as it was calculated for the state of society at that particular period, it can only be adopted with propriety under similar circumstances. Owing to the little attention that is usually paid to the minds of children, it is very commonly, but very erroneously supposed, that the impressions made during the first seven or eight years of life, are too slight to be worthy of notice ; and that, consequently, children of that age are, in every stage of society, and in every situation of life, so nearly the same, as to derive in all cases equal benefit from the same mode of instruction. By those who take the trouble to examine more closely into the subject it will be clearly seen, that, long before the age above-mentioned, nume-

rous associations of good and evil have been strongly riveted in the infant mind, deriving their form and colouring from the prevailing habits of those among whom they have lived. Thus, in a country where the poor have the gospel preached to them in language level to their comprehension, we may observe that impressions of reverence for religion, and for religious instruction, take place in the children of a virtuous peasantry at a very early age. - With these impressions upon their minds, they are sent to school; and while they consider it as the most glorious privilege to be able to read the word of God, though the worst possible method of teaching should be employed, they will not fail to reap the benefit of instruction. Their intellectual faculties may not seem to have been much improved, if tried on other subjects; but their notions of piety and integrity will be found sufficiently clear and accurate.

to serve as a lamp to guide their feet in the paths of peace, remote from the influence of a corrupting world.

But though it will readily be acknowledged, that there yet remains among the lower orders of society in this kingdom, even in her most populous cities, more of the spirit of religion, and a stricter observance of its moral precepts, than is to be found among the same description of persons, in perhaps any part of the world, we have, alas! had fatal proofs, with what destructive rapidity the contagion of vice has spread. On a strict inquiry it will probably be found, that the increase of vice in the inferior classes, has borne a very near proportion to the degree in which the increase of population in the larger towns has exceeded the provision made for public instruction. So wisely have the institutions of religion been framed, that a neglect of its ordinances proves not only subversive

of the spirit of piety, but of the feelings of moral rectitude: But in what great town has any suitable provision been made for the religious instruction of the multitude? When the word of God is not to be heard without the purchase of a passport, it is only by those who, from early impressions, have a notion of its value, that the price will be paid. But even when, from a sense of duty, the parents willingly part with the sum necessary to procure for themselves a seat in some of the churches; the poor cannot afford to extend the benefit to their children, to whom the Sabbath is consequently a day of idleness, frequently spent in the society of those who are less advanced in years than in profligacy. The habits of this second generation must be progressively deteriorated. Unaccustomed to have their passions controlled by the restraints

of religion, it cannot be supposed that they will set before their children an example of good conduct. In such circumstances, every impression made upon the infant mind will tend to connect the idea of the chief good with the indulgence of pride, or covetousness, or sensuality. Under the influence of such impressions, children may be impelled to learn to read and write, as instrumental to the acquirement of that worldly gain, which they have been early taught to view as the one thing needful, and which they know to be essential towards procuring the only gratifications for which they entertain a relish. But unless these impressions be removed, or effectually counteracted, all the instruction that can be conveyed by lessons, though aided by the restraints which school discipline imposes on the behaviour, will profit them nothing.

I have said nothing of the injury to which the minds and dispositions of children, in every situation, are liable to be exposed, through foolish fondness or capricious severity. But if, even in a society in which simplicity, industry, and piety, are the distinguishing characteristics, the faculties of children may be rendered obtuse through neglect, and their tempers and dispositions spoiled by indulgence;—where the manners of the lower orders are depraved, and their morals vitiated, we may expect to find, that, in addition to the corruptions inherited from nature, and in addition to the mental disorders contracted through injudicious management, children will bring with them to school the embryo of a thousand follies and vices, which, if not nipped in the bud, will produce a fruitful harvest of sin and misery.

They surely must have paid little attention to those circumstances who suppose, that by teaching children to read and write we apply a specific remedy, of power at once to rectify the depraved will, and to enlighten the darkened intellect. But we shall be told, that at school they likewise have the benefit of religious instruction ; that, at every elementary school, the Bible, or passages selected from the Bible, are read, and catechisms, or other summaries of faith, committed to memory ; and that, moreover, a due regard to morality is inculcated and produced by appropriate rewards and punishments ; and that children, in whatever state their minds may be, will inevitably under such discipline be formed to virtue.

To obscure by clouds of doubt those sanguine expectations, is by no means a pleasing task. But if, in dispelling hopes that are illusory, we lay a foundation for

hopes of a more solid nature, the pain it costs will be amply recompensed ; and it therefore appears to me, that, on a subject of such importance, none ought to be withheld, by the fear of giving offence or uneasiness, from expressing with sincerity their convictions.

Great as are the improvements that have recently been made in the methods of instruction, it will perhaps be found to demand greater attention than has hitherto been thought necessary, in order to render those improvements essentially beneficial to the community. If it be the great end of early education to develope the moral and intellectual faculties, it is obvious that the means ought to be adapted to the end proposed, and that the instruments to which we have recourse can only be deemed valuable, in proportion as they are calculated to operate on the faculties which it is our purpose to improve. It is not

enough to know, that the means of which we have made choice are intrinsically excellent, as, however good in the abstract, they can to us be of no further use, than as they apply to the mental and moral faculties of our pupils. If we admit that these are not in every situation of life, and in every stage of civilization, in an exactly similar state of advancement, we must perceive the futility of expecting, that under every variety of circumstance the same routine of instruction will be productive of the same results.—And, first, with regard to intellect.

How much the development of the first faculties of the mind is under certain circumstances retarded, I have elsewhere endeavoured to show.* When circumstances have been particularly un-

* See *Popular Essays*, Essay I, p. 2.

favourable, even the use of the external senses will be in a great degree circumscribed. Neither the eye nor the ear will be found accurately discriminative, nor will the understanding be capable of discernment, as in children of the same age it is frequently observed to be. Wherever this obtuseness is prevalent and habitual, it is not merely by forcing the dormant faculties to the degree of exertion necessary towards acquiring the arts of reading and writing, that the mental defect will be removed. If other means are not resorted to for remedying the evil, the arts acquired will never be applied to any useful purpose. The children may indeed be, through perseverance, taught to read and write, but they will remain destitute of capacity and intelligence. A tribute is justly due to the merits of Dr Bell and Mr Lancaster, for having introduced methods of instruction so admirably calculated for im-

proving the primary faculties by perpetual exercise, that, if applied with proper attention by the teacher, they can hardly in any instance fail of success. But so little is the nature of the advantages understood; so frequently is the utility of either of the plans appreciated merely by the facilities it offers of increasing the number of pupils without an increase of expense, that in many schools in which the methods of Bell or Lancaster have been ostensibly adopted, those minute particulars, which are of the utmost importance as being instrumental in the development of the faculties, have already sunk into disuse. Instead of dismissing as useless the forms and practices which tend to rouse the perceptions of the dull, and to produce accuracy of discernment in the giddy, they might with great propriety be in many instances extended; and in every in-

stance ought to be modified so as to meet the prevailing wants.

Every large school presenting an epitome of that class of society to which the pupils belong, whatever be the virtues or vices, the peculiar modes of thinking and acting, by which that description of persons is characterized, the same will be seen in embryo in the assemblage of infants.

When there exists a general love of order and respect for the authority of the laws, and quick perception of the value of neatness and regularity, as conducive to domestic comfort, children will come to school prepared to obey with alacrity, and to receive instruction with thankfulness. When the opposite to this description is generally prevalent, we may be prepared to find, even in the infant state, the pride that revolts from authority and abhors subordination ; an obstinate self-will creating a sullen opposition to all rules and regulations, and a perfect

indifference to the voice of praise or censure. Again,—

When, with a general decency of deportment, and much shrewdness and sagacity, there at the same time prevails a certain slovenliness and want of attention to minutia, the perceptions of children, with regard to external objects, will be found dull and languid; but in regard to what is addressed to the judgment or imagination, not by any means equally deficient. Very opposite in this respect to the children of banditti, who live by committing depredations, and depend on adroitness and address for escaping detection. To such objects Christian philanthropy has extended its generous cares; and in the institutions which have been founded for the purpose of reclaiming and instructing those infant outcasts, abundant proof might be found of the effect produced by the original habits, in quickening the powers of ob-

servation, while the judgment and the moral sense remained dormant or obtuse.

But, without resorting to extreme cases for an illustration of our argument, we may, in the difference of national character, find ample reason to doubt, whether the same means of instruction, and the same mode of discipline, can apply with equal effect to all. Why pride should in some communities be the predominating principle, and vanity in others, it is no part of our business to inquire; but it is our business to notice, that where the former prevails, there will be more steadiness than alacrity, a greater dread of incurring punishment or disgrace, than a solicitude to obtain favour and approbation; and that where the latter predominates, there will be an avidity to learn, attended by a volatility destructive of application, an indifference to threats, but an ardent thirst for praise, acting occasionally as a stimu-

lous to exertion. If, without any regard to these characteristic differences, we construct every elementary school upon a given model, and confine ourselves exclusively to the use of such means of instruction as have in some instances proved efficacious, the utility of such foundations will be limited within narrow compass.

What has been said of the benefits that have resulted to Scotland, from the establishment of parochial schools, may, at first view, appear to clash with this observation; but, on closer inspection, the seeming inconsistency will be done away. The method of instruction adopted at the parochial schools was suited to the state and condition of society at that particular period, and therefore the most eligible that could then have been chosen; and if we consider the nature of the impulse given to the mind in this country, by the zeal of our first refor-

mers, in whom, to their everlasting honour, the idea of instituting a system of national education originated,* we shall easily account for the success with which it was attended. The knowledge of letters, at first highly prized, as leading to the enjoyment of that right of reading the Scriptures which the reformation had established, came by degrees to be valued on account of secular advantages. To those advantages the attention of boys was henceforth, from infancy, directed. Taught to consider school acquirements as the means of advancing their condition in life, and of promoting their worldly prosperity, they derived from hardships and poverty incentives to assiduity. The consequences are well known; nor will it be disputed, that they have been highly favourable to industry and morals.

* See M'CREE's *Life of Knox.*

In the case alluded to it ought however to be observed, that as the benefit derived from the parochial seminaries is in great measure to be ascribed to the force of those associations which had taken place in the minds of the scholars, we have hence no right to infer any thing in favour of the method of instruction. The parochial schools were not open exclusively to one sex. As far as learning to read and write by the same masters, girls have in Scotland enjoyed the benefits of instruction on a footing of equality with boys. But while in the labouring classes we have innumerable instances of men advancing, in consequence of their better education, to a manifest superiority over the unlettered peasantry of a richer and more fertile region; in their school associates of the female sex, no such consequences are discernible. Destitute of the same propitious impulse, they have neither made

the same acquirements, nor have they in many instances been found able to turn to any account the little they have learned. So seldom, indeed, does this happen, that to meet with a woman capable of communicating to her children a knowledge of those elementary branches of learning, in which she was herself instructed at school, is a matter of rare occurrence. May we not consider these facts as affording ample proof, that the advantages derived from school education depend on the mental habits and dispositions that have been previously introduced; and that, consequently, where these happen to be unfavourable, if means are not employed to bring the mind into a state susceptible of instruction, no permanent or substantial benefit will be conferred. The same observations will be found to apply to the subject of religious instruction, and to the mode in which it has, by long established custom, been

conveyed. That mode is still averred to be infallible and all-sufficient, by those who only take into consideration the religious knowledge evinced, and the religious character displayed by the Scottish peasantry, when no other method of instruction was known or practised. What better proof, say they, could we desire of the propriety of putting the Bible into the hands of children, as soon as they have learned their letters, and teaching them to spell and put together word by word, verse after verse, and chapter after chapter of the sacred volume? What better proof of the benefit derived from committing to memory truths too deep for comprehension, and propositions too abstruse to be clearly understood by many who have attained maturity; than that to this mode of instruction the poor of Scotland have been indebted for the piety and morality by which they have been eminently distin-

guished? But under what circumstances, did this mode of instruction prove effectual? Was it on those who had from their cradles learned to connect the idea of religious knowledge with notions of honour, and happiness, and respectability, that its influence proved salutary? If so, the only inference that can reasonably be made is, that where the mind has from infancy been imbued with veneration for religion, the impression will very easily be rendered permanent.

In a state of society such as has been described, even the routine of school instruction, little as it is calculated to enlighten the understanding, or to excite the feelings of piety in the heart, will serve to strengthen the associations that have already taken place in the children of pious parents. Taught to consider the Bible as the word of God, and to connect the idea of God with their earliest notions of a Judge and Lawgiver,

they, even without understanding what they read, are easily impressed with awe and respect for the divine commandments ; and, irksome as they find the task, of committing to memory incomprehensible explanations of what is to them incomprehensible doctrines, they, in performing the task, consider themselves to be performing a religious duty. In the bosom of a religious family, these mental habits are strengthened by the principle of imitation. The zeal thus engendered is indeed too often a zeal without knowledge ; but still the fear of God is rooted in the heart ; and while these wholesome impressions are not peculiar to a few individuals of that class in which the lot of life is cast, but are common to all who have any claim to respectability, they will, instead of being weakened as life advances, be increased by sympathy with the feelings and sentiments of others. Nor is this an imagi-

nary picture. It is drawn from actual observation, made at a time when, among those destined to rural labour, piety and virtue were the constant inhabitants of the poor man's cottage.

But if we would truly ascertain whether it is by putting the Bible into the hands of children as a spelling-book, and the catechism as an exercise of memory, that impressions are inevitably to be made on the mind and heart of importance to the future conduct, we had better have recourse to observation. If, even amid the corruptions of society, this mode of instruction is still supposed completely efficacious, whence comes it, that in honesty, sobriety, truthfulness, diligent discharge of duty, gentleness, and humility,—virtues acknowledged to belong to the Christian character,—there should now be so very little difference between those who have thus been instructed in religion, and those who have remain-

ed destitute of all religious instruction, that as servants, and in all places of trust and confidence, the balance is frequently in favour of those whose habits of moral rectitude and propriety of behaviour have been established in no higher motives than a regard to character, as essential to worldly interests? Are we then to consider religious instruction of no avail? God forbid! The facts to which I have alluded ought, on the contrary, to lead to a serious investigation of the circumstances by which it may be rendered more effectual, and produce more extensive and more lasting influence on the moral character.

If, without regarding the change that has taken place in the habits of the people,—a change which has perceptibly communicated its impulse even to the infant mind,—we content ourselves with adopting that mode of instruction which was in former times attended with success, we

have no right to expect a satisfactory result from our labours. Let us then, seeing that we can no longer depend on the co-operation arising from the example of parents, and of society, make it our first endeavour to compensate, as far as possible, to the children of the poor for their increased disadvantages. Let us endeavour to supply to them the want of those early associations, by which the understanding is opened to perceive the path of duty, and the heart inclined to walk in the ways of truth and righteousness.

It is much to be regretted, that of the wise few have qualified themselves, by observation, to form an estimate of the deficiencies under which the children of the ignorant are doomed to labour. Men who rarely attend to the minds of children, are apt to forget by what a slow and gradual process the faculties of the understanding are opened, and therefore,

in their schemes for education, take not into consideration the circumstances which may have impeded the process, and prevented even the first power of intellect from coming into action.

Had it not been for this unfortunate oversight, men of true piety would never have authorized the practice of commencing religious instruction by abstract propositions addressed to the reasoning faculty, while that faculty was yet dormant and without perceptible existence. And as it is not only with the understanding, but with the heart, that man believeth unto righteousness; they would clearly have perceived, that unless both the heart and understanding be prepared for receiving the instruction to be given, it will be given in vain.

To render elementary education thoroughly and extensively beneficial, it must be made to influence the affections; to reclaim them when they have

been directed to improper objects ; and to elevate them to embrace the pure spirit of the gospel. From the prevailing habits of society this becomes every day more necessary. The improvement of the dispositions in infancy is, by the vulgar of all ranks, utterly disregarded ; but, in the inferior walks of life, the heart and temper do not only suffer from neglect ; they are generally, from the mode of treatment pursued, essentially, nay, sometimes irretrievably, injured.— Whether senseless indulgence or brutal severity be most injurious, I shall not now inquire, as every person who has thought upon the subject will readily admit, that both are adverse to the development of the affections of the heart ; and that when the moral principles of our nature are permitted to remain dormant, while its worst passions are brought perpetually into exercise, much must be undone before any effectual improve-

ment can be produced. That it is not by the restraints of school discipline, that the tempers and dispositions which have been wrought into habit by previous indulgence will be completely changed, is sufficiently obvious. So seldom has this important point met with the attention it deserves, that at no school is it thought necessary to bestow any pains, in removing those obstacles which the indulgence of the vindictive passions opposes to whatever has a decided tendency to cultivate and improve the affections of the heart. Rarely has any provision been directly made for this species of improvement. It is therefore, as was above observed, only incidentally that the temper and dispositions are benefited in the course of school education: Nay, so far are they from being benefited, that, if we consider the precepts of our religion as authoritative, we must pronounce them the very reverse; the passions of

pride and vanity, to which these precepts are most adverse, being in many instances rather stimulated than subdued by the mode of discipline introduced.

But little as may hitherto have been done to promote the improvement of the heart, and the regulation of its desires and affections, a great step has been made towards effecting a more general development of the intellectual powers, by the methods of teaching introduced by Dr Bell and Mr Lancaster.

Their systems have this property in common, that, by awaking attention, they compel the infant mind to the unceasing exercise of faculties, which, in the former method, were only occasionally exerted, and were, therefore, never thoroughly developed. Whether the system of Bell or Lancaster be adopted, either will be found, when put fully and properly into execution, to promote such habits of quick and accurate obser-

vation, as must prove essentially beneficial to the pupils in after life. But it is with systems of education as with systems of government,—much of their utility will still depend on their due administration. Here, as in matters of higher concern, it will soon be discovered, that if the spirit be wanting, “mere bodily exercise profiteth nothing.”

Let any intelligent person, who, from being deeply interested in the subject of education, takes the trouble, during a pleasurable excursion of any extent, to visit all the schools that fall in his way, declare the fruits of his observations. He will, in every part of the three kingdoms, meet with schools conducted on one or other of the above mentioned plans; and by the time he has visited six or eight of those seminaries, will be competent to form a judgment on their comparative merits. If he views them with unprejudiced eyes he will perceive, that in

some instances, where the method of Dr. Bell has been adhered to, the pupils evince such intelligence as to prove that their minds have made rapid progress in improvement, and that in other instances, where the same plan is to all appearance strictly followed, the listless eye and vacant countenance give certain indication of intellectual torpidity. On visiting a number of schools conducted on the Lancastrian plan, the same observations will occur; the non-effect, not ascribable in either instance to any defect in the system, but to a defective administration of it; or what is no less fatal, to its not having been adapted to the state and circumstances of the pupils. If, from the slothful habits, or the ignorance or negligence of the parents, the mental deficiencies in the children are greater than has been provided for in the method of instruction used, the remedy will fall short of the disorder. But if the deve-

lopment and improvement of the mental faculties have never entered into the teacher's views, it cannot be supposed that he will of himself set about contriving means more effectual. Hence arises the necessity of committing those seminaries to the superintendence of judicious and reflecting minds. It is on the manner in which this important office, of directing the efforts of the teacher, is discharged, more than on the choice of system, that the benefit to the pupils will be found ultimately to depend.

The comparative excellence of the methods of Bell and Lancaster has been long and eagerly contested; nor has the contest here, as in other cases, been productive of evil. It has, on the contrary, by exciting the attention of the public, and directing it to an examination of the arguments offered by each party in support of its favourite system, been eminently useful. And as there are persons

in the world on whom the spirit of opposition has greater influence than the spirit of charity, the zeal of party has, in this particular instance, proved an active and useful auxiliary to the zeal of benevolence. A vast increase of the means of education has been the happy result; and, as the great object of education comes to be more fully examined, and more clearly understood, it will not be the comparative, but the real value of those systems, that will any longer seem worthy of attention. If either may be so administered as to facilitate the expansion of the infant mind, and to improve the understanding, by a judicious exercise of its early powers, it is evident that either method may be adopted with advantage. It is, on the other hand, equally clear, that if each of the two systems are liable to failure, we may make choice of either, and, after taking much pains to set the machine in motion,

may, through the negligence or unskillfulness of those to whose hands we entrust its management, be disappointed in our expectations of success.

When expectations have been sanguine, people are in general very unwilling to be undeceived. Having seen evident proofs, in some instances, of the good effects produced by the system they have adopted, they cannot conceive how, or why, it should fail to be productive of the same effects in every instance; and, provided they see all the wheels of the machinery moving with apparent velocity, persuade themselves that all is well.

It is thus that, by a voluntary delusion on the parts of the patrons and managers of those useful establishments, their beneficial consequences are liable to be abridged or lost to the community. Inspection will, in such cases, be found to degenerate into a mere formal ceremony, attended with no other advantage

besides that of impressing the scholars with certain vague notions, of the importance derived to themselves and to their masters, from being thus made objects of attention to their superiors in rank. But if the cultivation and improvement of the moral and intellectual faculties be really the end in view, it is not surely at a glance that the progress to that desirable object can be ascertained. Whatever confusion may at other times prevail, it may be presumed that no symptoms of disorder will, during the presence of the visitor, be manifested. At his approach all will fall into their ranks; every babbling tongue will become silent, and every restless limb be still. The master is perhaps applied to for information respecting the behaviour of his pupils, and their progress in improvement. Can it be expected, that, however incompetent he may be, he will, in the report he makes, suffer his incompe-

tency to appear? But an examination of the pupils likewise, at stated periods, takes place. And how is this examination conducted? It may be, that a certain number of pupils from each class are called up to exhibit specimens of their proficiency in reading, writing, spelling, and cyphering; and as these are selected by the master, it rarely happens that they fail to acquit themselves to satisfaction. When, indeed, did we ever hear of any school-examination of which unbounded satisfaction was not the result? Applause is sure to follow. And the astonishing advantages attending the Bell, or the Lancastrian method of teaching, (which-ever happens to have been adopted), is echoed, and re-echoed, by all the active members of the establishment, as affording indubitable proof of the superiority of that particular system.

All this while it may happen, and it frequently does happen, that of the many hundred children in constant attendance

at the school, none have been materially benefited by the education they have there received, except the few whose mental faculties had been previously opened by circumstances favourable to their development and exercise. If we examine into the state of the remainder we shall find, that, though compelled to give the degree of attention necessary to enable them to imitate what they saw done by others, and to repeat what they heard repeated by those around them, they neither comprehended the use of what was done, nor the meaning of what was repeated. Without comprehending either, they have, from the principle of imitation, and from the exertion of memory, been able to perform their tasks so as to have got on, step by step, through every class. But what advantage will they reap from being capable of performing mechanically all that they have at school been taught? Without mind, or

the capacity of exerting any mental energy, can it be expected that they will employ the arts of reading and writing to any useful purpose? Admitting that their minds have been by collision somewhat brightened, if on leaving school they are doomed to associate with the depraved and ignorant, their increased facility of imitation may prove to them a dangerous and fatal acquirement.

It may as yet be only in a very few instances that schools upon the modern improved plans are so ill conducted, as to render it possible that the mind of any child of tolerable capacity can be left in the hopeless state I have described. But if it be possible, that, notwithstanding the manifest tendency of the new systems to bring the moral and intellectual faculties into action, the conductor of the machinery may, by directing it solely to the accomplishment of his own particular purpose, render it abortive in

regard to the higher and more important purposes of improvement ; it is evident, that in establishing schools we do not to a certainty provide for the instruction of the lower classes, unless we at the same time secure to them the benefit of being always conducted under the controlling eye of intelligent managers.

If a watchful and minute attention to the manner in which the machinery is applied, be necessary in schools for boys, it becomes still more necessary in regard to schools where girls only are admitted. And happily, such are the blessed effects of an increase of intellectual cultivation in giving energy to benevolence, that wherever schools are established, they find in the sex their most zealous supporters, and their most active and judicious friends. In alluding to this fact, I do not mean to pay a compliment to my sex, but merely to show, that the consequences which naturally result from

enlightening the understanding, so as to enable it to walk steadily in the path of principle, are in all respects beneficial to the individuals and to society. As an illustration of this useful truth I may be permitted to observe, that in proportion as the female mind has been emancipated from the fetters of ignorance, the female character has risen in respectability. Wherever religious principle has been made the basis, it has been seen that a liberal system of education, instead of producing a dislike to, or dereliction of peculiar and appropriate duties, has enabled women, without infringing on any duty, to enlarge their sphere of usefulness, and to extend, beyond the narrow precincts of the domestic roof, the beneficial influence of maternal solicitude and maternal tenderness. Of the numerous charity-schools on a small scale established throughout England and Ireland, more than three-fourths have been in-

stituted and endowed by ladies; and of the larger schools that have been erected since the introduction of the improved methods of teaching, those appropriated to girls are, almost without exception, superintended by ladies only.

Where the attention thus bestowed has in any instance failed of success, it is not to want of solicitude or of vigilance that the failure is to be ascribed. It may in a great plurality of instances be traced to far other sources, and will be found to originate in dispositions that do honour to the individual character, or in deficiencies naturally resulting from limited opportunities of observation.

Of the schools that have been established by ladies of fortune, under their own immediate eye, and conducted under their immediate inspection upon a given plan, few have failed to prosper. To the benevolence which prompted to the execution of the scheme, is in such cases

added the anxious feelings of responsibility, exciting to a careful application of the means to be employed, and to the exercise of a wholesome controul over the subordinate agents, who are considered but as instruments used for effecting with greater facility the designs contemplated by the directing mind. Where, on the other hand, the direction and superintendence of a school devolves on a certain number of ladies, though all may be inspired by an equal portion of zeal and of benevolence, it is only in the general wish of doing good that unity of design can be expected to take place. Restrained by timidity, and by habits of reserve, from openly declaring their individual opinions, when not certain that they will be received with approbation, or meet with sympathy from all their coadjutors; and having the weight of responsibility lightened, from being shared with numbers, they are, in such cir-

stances, apt to content themselves with an exact observance of certain prescribed rules. Instead, then, of exerting over the teacher, (who ought to be considered in no other light than as an instrument to be guided by their conducting hand), the wholesome influence of a wise and judicious controul, they permit the teacher to assume the sole government and direction; and, in inquiring into the progress of her pupils, restrict themselves to examining them on those points to which she directs their attention.

Now it is, as I think, obvious, that a schoolmistress may be extremely well qualified for initiating in the arts of reading, writing, and needle-work, without having in her mind an idea beyond what is necessary to the performance of these operations. It is in the due performance of them that her notions of education are comprised. Her mind may

have been so far stretched, as to have gained a knowledge of Bell's method, or Lancaster's method of instruction, without having been enabled to perceive any other advantage accruing from either; besides that of diminishing the labour of the teacher, and multiplying the number of the scholars.

By a person of this description, a school on either of the plans may be so far organized, as to exhibit all the apparatus of monitors or sub-teachers, with their appropriate decorations; and, from the little dabblers in sand to the performers in needle-work, all may, to the eye of an unexperienced observer, appear to be conducted with admirable skill. Of three or four hundred children, it cannot be supposed that all have come to school with minds equally torpid, and equally destitute of instruction; some, therefore, of the number will be qualified to exhibit such specimens of their performance,

as will be sufficient to satisfy the casual visitor of the effectual success of the method that has been adopted. But by those who have better and more frequent opportunities of observing, it will soon be discovered, that the rapid progress in improvement is limited to the few, who, from habits previously acquired, were disposed to application; and that those alone seem to understand what they are about. Even in the manner of practising the evolutions, (which form a part, and no unimportant part of the Lancastrian system), the inertness and stupidity arising from defective perception and discernment, will be apparent in every tardy and sluggish movement. A certain degree of confusion will of course take place, though, by the constant interference and authority of the mistress, it may be kept within such bounds, as not utterly to destroy all the distinguishing features of the organization she boasts of:

as complete. In a case such as I have described, it will soon be perceived that something is wrong; but what, or where the fault lies, may not be so easily discovered. The mistress cannot be accused of negligence, for she labours with unwearyed diligence in exhorting the idle, and punishing the refractory, and keeping all to their respective tasks. But if, in the performance of these tasks, no other faculties have been brought into exercise but those of imitation and memory, though by the exertion of those many may have learned to read, and write, and sew, and to repeat catechisms and chapters off book with tolerable correctness, there will not among the whole be found one fully competent to act with propriety as monitor or teacher to others. The schoolmistress may, perhaps, perceive with astonishment their incapacity, and, on comparing them with children whom she has seen acting as moni-

tors in other schools, deplore her unhappy lot, in having to deal with children more incorrigible in stupidity than any children in the world. If the visitors enter into her feelings, they will perhaps be induced to subscribe to her opinion with regard to the existence of some radical defect in the faculties of the poor girls, who are so obviously unqualified for teaching to others what they themselves have learned, and who, alike destitute of judgment and discernment, neither perceive nor understand the nature of the duty they are called on to perform.

In schools organized according to what is now called the national system, the same thing may, and doubtless in many instances does occur, though it will on that system, for reasons hereafter to be mentioned, be less immediately obvious. On both systems instruction is conveyed from child to child, and will be convey-

ed more or less effectually, according as the child who acts as teacher is qualified to communicate to another what she has herself acquired. On either system a child may be qualified to imitate what she sees done, and yet remain unqualified to proceed one step of herself when the model is removed.

The tenacity of memory at an early age, by enabling children to repeat words by rote, without the exertion of any power of intellect, is an ample source of deception and delusion; as it not unfrequently happens, that when a class is called up to repeat what they have committed to memory, the most stupid are found to excel. When the words are accurately remembered, and distinctly repeated, how natural is it for those who listen, to persuade themselves, that what has been thus remembered and repeated has been at the same time thoroughly understood. Believing that all the ideas

of which the words are properly significant, have been communicated to the minds of the children as to their own minds, they look forward with joy to the happy consequences which must ensue; and, whatever defects they may have observed in the faculties and dispositions, console themselves with an assurance, that, in the end, both heart and mind must be effectually improved by such an accession of religious knowledge.

At such a moment of joyful anticipation, it would be but an ungrateful task to point out the delusive nature of expectations so sanguine; yet, surely, a little consideration would show their fallacy. When the degree of observation and judgment, requisite to the performance of the duties of a monitor, is so far from having been obtained as to be manifestly defective, can it with any plausibility be concluded, that minds so deficient are nevertheless, on subjects demanding

a much higher exercise of those powers, fully competent to act? Even in giving oral instruction, it is very necessary to be upon our guard against self-deception, as, if we believe that all we say to children necessarily conveys to their minds our own ideas upon the subject we wish to impress, we shall be apt frequently to waste our breath in vain. It is therefore necessary to keep perpetually in our remembrance, that all we say beyond what is clearly understood, is to them as if it were spoken in a foreign language; and that, of all we teach them to repeat, it is only that portion of it to which distinct ideas are attached, that can make any useful impression on their minds or hearts.

On the utility of religious instruction we may rely with confidence; but, unless the mind be rendered capable of comprehending, and the heart be disposed to apply the instruction given, it will

prove fruitless. In the present state of society, it is not a vague notion of Deity, nor momentary feelings of reverence, but that species of conviction which at once operates on the heart and understanding, that can alone prove effectual; and if, in the exercise of that faith which influences the conduct, the intellect and the affections are in happy combination, it follows, that when the intellect is permitted to remain dormant, and the affections obtuse, true and effectual belief will never be produced. In this point of view, the method of instruction employed in the national schools is highly deserving of commendation. When that method is adopted and duly put in practice, it will always be ascertained, that one child at least, in every class, thoroughly understands what he reads. From him, indeed, the remainder of the class may repeat, without having any accurate notion of the subject, though,

from the admirable promptitude with which the reply is often given, this may very easily escape observation.

Far, however, from undervaluing this part of the system introduced by Dr Bell, it is my earnest wish to see it generally adopted; and hoping and believing, that as just and accurate notions of the ends and purposes of education come to be more widely disseminated, the propriety of neither rejecting nor adopting the whole of any particular system, on account of preference or objection to any of its component parts, will be universally acknowledged; I cannot doubt, that whatever in any plan presents greatest facilities for promoting the end we have in view, will without hesitation be laid hold on, by whatever party it has been sanctioned, or by whomsoever it may at first have been introduced. Little would it redound to the honour of this enlightened age, were those pos-

cessed of power and influence to act, as if they viewed particular systems of education as nostrums, deriving all their virtue from certain combinations known only to those by whom they were prepared, and which, therefore, to have any effect, must be swallowed in the lump. Infinitely more consonant to the good sense by which our country is distinguished, would be the cautious analyzation of every system proposed; as, without such analysis, it is not possible to establish in what proportions its nutritive or healing qualities are dispensed. Nor is it enough simply to ascertain the wholesomeness of all the ingredients in the composition. The state of the patients in whom they are to operate must be taken into the account. Remedies, however innocent, however salutary, if not adapted to the constitution, will be applied in vain.

Not only with regard to the means employed for improving the intellect, and imparting the rudiments of knowledge, but in regard to the discipline which is intended to rectify the will and improve the dispositions, is precaution necessary. All inherit from nature a similar portion of infirmity. But who will venture to assert, that to the children of simple and industrious peasants, who never saw an example of vice, and never heard crime mentioned without symptoms of abhorrence; and to the little swarms of infant vagabonds, born and bred in the loathsome habitations of poverty, in a great city, amid scenes of profligacy and disorder, the same remedies are strictly applicable? When the previous circumstances have been thus opposite, can it be supposed that one inviolable method of instruction will be applied in every instance with like effect? It is not improbable, that the situation

least propitious to virtue may have presented superior opportunities for the early exercise of the perceptions, which will be evinced in a more quick discernment, and greater promptitude in imitating. Of the imposing smartness which is thus produced the teacher will readily avail himself, as it will doubtless be found greatly to abridge his labour. But if the means employed for developing and expanding these early powers be calculated to apply only to cases of this description, we need not be surprised, that when applied to cases of another description they are found inadequate. When all the habits acquired in infancy have been unfavourable to the exercise of perception and observation, instead of the smartness that is so often mistaken for intelligence, and the promptitude which embraces new objects with facility, there will often appear a dulness, amounting almost to stupidity, and a

sluggish indifference to every object that does not promise immediate gratification to the senses. Can we believe that these children, if they had from their birth been placed in circumstances similar to the others, would, at the present period, have been in all respects as forward, and not at the same time perceive the necessity of endeavouring to adapt the rudiments of instruction to the peculiar state of their minds? So indispensable is it, as a preliminary to all improvement, to awaken the dormant faculties, that wherever this is neglected no considerable improvement will take place.

It may happen, that in situations most favourable to the development of some of the mental powers, the moral feelings and affections may not only have remained uncultivated, but destroyed by the indulgence of vicious propensities. To restrain those propensities, it may be also necessary to resort to modes of pu-

nishment, which, on minds of another description, might be productive of the most injurious effects.

Hence appears the absurdity of forming every school, in whatever part of the empire it may be established, exactly upon one or other of the models concerning whose comparative excellence so much has been unnecessarily said. To the young persons, however, who have been instructed in the art of teaching, as practised at the Lancastrian schools, every part of the system will probably appear of equal importance; and even with regard to the administration of rewards and punishments, equally applicable to children of every rank and description. By those, on the other hand, who have been instructed in the plan of Dr Bell, every idea of improving on that plan will be rejected as heretical. But though masters and mistresses may be expected strenuously to oppose every

attempt that may be made to unite the two systems, by selecting from each whatever appears to be best adapted to the peculiar circumstances and habits of those whose education is in view, it is to be hoped, that by the firmness and good sense of more enlightened minds, such opposition will be rendered ineffectual.

There are few things which ought to be regarded with greater dread, than the paralyzing influence of that species of bigotry, which eagerly attaches to the objects of preference notions of perfection. To believe that any of the methods of instruction now in use, are so perfect as to be insusceptible of improvement, would be absurd in those who do not claim for their authors any title to infallibility. If therefore we find, that in any part of the world discoveries have been made of methods still more effectual, we will surely not scorn to avail

ourselves of them, merely on account of their having first been introduced into a distant region. It is long since the fame of Pestalozzi first attracted the attention of British travellers towards the school in Switzerland, to which he has given celebrity. But of those cursory visitors, though all saw with astonishment the effects produced by his mode of communicating the knowledge of geometry to little children, who, on the strictest examination, were found thoroughly and completely to comprehend the nature of the science, and the meaning of all they had been taught,—few thought of inquiring whether the principle upon which Pestalozzi had proceeded, might not be capable of more extensive application.

Upon farther investigation it however appears, that the principle adopted and adhered to by Pestalozzi is in its nature universal, and may be universally ap-

plied. It is neither deep nor intricate, nor beyond the comprehension of the most ordinary capacity. In few words, it is simply attending to the laws of nature. By these it has been obtained, that the human understanding, though it may be gradually opened, and enabled to embrace a vast extent of knowledge, can only be opened gradually, and by a regular series of efforts. Pestalozzi perceiving, that when one idea upon any subject had been acquired by a child, the idea next in succession was no sooner presented than imbibed; and also observing, that when it was attempted to force upon children ideas having no connexion with any that had previously entered their minds, the attempt proved fruitless, took the hint from nature, and wisely formed his plan in conformity to hers. Instead of making children repeat words that suggested ideas to his own mind, he set himself to observe what were the

ideas that actually existed in theirs. He then, by questions adapted to their capacity, induced them to make such further exertion of their powers, as enabled them to add new ideas to their slender stock; and, by persevering in the process, expanded their faculties to a degree, which, to those best qualified to judge of the difficulties of the abstruse science he professed to teach, seemed little short of miraculous.

But though it was the proficiency made by his little pupils in geometry that chiefly excited the admiration of the public, the success with which he applied the same principle to the more important purposes of communicating moral and religious instruction, is yet more worthy of our notice and applause.

Pestalozzi dismissed from his service all the excitements of punishment and reward. The habits of the Swiss peasantry doubtless contributed to the suc-

cess of the experiment, as it cannot be supposed that the children of those simple villagers stood equally in need of strong excitement, as children, who, from their situation, are compelled to associate with depravity in an overgrown metropolis. But making every allowance for the favourable nature of the circumstances, still it must be acknowledged, that such nice notions and constant practice of moral rectitude; such a complete subjugation of every turbulent and selfish passion; and such cordial harmony and fraternal love, as is asserted to have been exemplified in the school of Pestalozzi, have been rarely exhibited even in situations the most favourable. The means employed by Pestalozzi to improve the heart and dispositions, as they have been described to me by those who have made inquiries upon the spot, seems to be extremely simple, and extremely obvious; yet, sim-

ple as they are, and infallible as is their operation, many and obstinate are the prejudices that must be surmounted, ere we can expect to see them generally adopted. The effect resulting from them, as exemplified in this school of morality, is what has been termed by our old divines, *the practice of the presence of God*. Other children are taught to say, that God is ever present; but the pupils of Pestalozzi are taught to know and to feel in their hearts, that in God they live and move and have their being. The conviction is impressed and rivetted in their minds, so as never to be for a single moment obscured. Nor does this belief produce in them the slavish fear which so naturally leads to a gloomy superstition; neither does it produce any tendency to that enthusiasm which expends its fires in the fervid and useless blaze of ecstacy;—it is productive simply of the feelings of reverence, and gratitude, and

love, accompanied by that sense of the divine protection which inspires courage and confidence, and that ardent desire of the divine approbation which leads to the practice of every virtue.

But has not the knowledge of God, which is the first principle of all religion, been elsewhere as carefully taught? Does it not form the chief object in every lesson of elementary instruction? What then does Pestalozzi more than others?—He does no more than others intend and desire to do; his instructions are only rendered more certainly efficacious, from his mode of applying them. According to his method, the mind of the pupil cannot be passive in receiving instruction. It is compelled to work its way to knowledge; and, having its activity properly directed, is led step by step to the perception of truth. Instead of repeating words on subjects so important as to demand the most serious con-

sideration, but too far removed from the ideas which occupy the minds of children, to admit a possibility of their being easily understood, his pupils are made to proceed by a regular process from one idea to another, until the same proposition, which was in the former instance repeated by rote, seems to them the evident deduction of reason. While the stock of ideas is yet extremely limited, it is only to propositions of the simplest nature that he directs the attention. He knows, that nothing short of a miraculous interposition of divine power would enable the mind, in such a state, to reach to those which are abstruse and abstract; and, happily, an understanding of these is not absolutely essential towards preparing an intelligent being for duly fulfilling every religious and social duty.

To every child born in a Christian country, some notion of the existence of a superior but invisible Being, is communicat-

ed. This notion, vague as it may often be, forms a ground-work, whence the mind may be led, by a gradual process, till it arrives at clear and accurate conceptions concerning the power, wisdom, goodness, and other attributes of Deity. Each of the divine attributes which are thus successively discovered, soon come to be contemplated with correspondent emotions of love, reverence, and adoration. An idea of the continual presence of Him with whom every idea of purity and holiness is inseparably united, must inevitably prove a sure foundation whereon to build just and accurate notions of moral rectitude. Nor is it on the mind alone that such impressions will operate; their influence cannot fail to reach the heart. Wherever the ideas of God are of a nature calculated to excite the emotions of love and gratitude, they will inevitably produce in the disposition a tendency to benevolence. Here, then, we

have an explanation of the extraordinary phenomena exhibited in the school of Pestalozzi, where, as we are credibly informed, children of every age seem to be inspired by one spirit of piety to God, and tender affection towards each other, and unparallelled diligence in their pursuits. That these effects are produced without the stimulus of rewards or punishments, will not appear surprising, when we consider the higher nature of the motives excited by those objects to which the attention was constantly directed. But, however sanguine might reasonably be our expectations of similar success, from pursuing a similar method of instruction, we have, I fear, but little reason to hope that it will ever be generally adopted. Even were persons sent to the school of Pestalozzi to learn from him the art of teaching, unless their minds were capable of taking a comprehensive view of the principles on which

he proceeds, they would, on their return, be found only to have acquired a new mode of teaching geometry. Like many of those who have been instructed in Bell's method, or Lancaster's method, they would pique themselves on having obtained a competent knowledge of the theory, while yet so completely ignorant of its essential principles, as only to be able to practise what they have learned, under the concurrence of circumstances in all respects exactly similar to those which prevailed in the seminary in which their little knowledge was acquired.

In regard, therefore, to schools which are to be left solely to the management of persons, who consider the benefits of education to be all comprised in the acquirement of certain arts, or accomplishments, all that can be done is, at their institution to make choice of such methods of teaching as are most obviously calculated to produce some improvement

on the faculties of the pupils, and such methods of instruction in religion as offer the greatest probability of making an impression on the understanding and the heart. If the school is to be formed on the Lancastrian plan, difficult as it may be to persuade the teacher, that any advantage can result from ingrafting Bell's method of reading the Scriptures on Lancaster's method of teaching to read and write, the patrons of the school, if that advantage is obvious to them, ought to insist on the adoption of the mode which seems to them preferable. But in every case where the inspection is only to be cursory and superficial, the rules and regulations ought to be absolute.

In regard to schools which, instead of being thus left to the sole direction of a teacher, are conducted under the vigilant inspection of intelligent managers, the case is widely different. To those active and enlightened benefactors of

the human race, every proposal for improving the plan of education ought to be addressed; for by them whatever has an apparent tendency to render instruction more easy or more effectual, will be deemed deserving of consideration. In estimating its value, their judgment will not be warped by any preconceived prejudices, neither will they be excited nor intimidated by the authority of names; but, regarding all else as matters of indifference, will be guided in their rejection or adoption of the plan proposed, by their unbiassed opinion of its utility; and if it promises to be truly useful, they will not be withheld, by the vulgar dread of innovation, from submitting it to the test of experience.

The methods employed in the education of boys, though always thought worthy of attention, are found to be still susceptible of improvement. How much more so must be the case with regard to

the methods that have been hitherto practised in schools for girls, considering the little importance formerly attached to the education of the sex in any station, and how utterly it has, with respect to those of lower rank, been disregarded. As much more, therefore, remains to be done in the latter case than in the former, it is on the patronesses of the schools for girls that the heavier task devolves; but it is a task neither too comprehensive for their understanding, nor too arduous for their zeal.

Of the ladies that take an active part in the superintendence and management of girls' schools, there are seldom any who, if a school were left to her single management, would not in a very short time overcome every obstacle to its thorough and perfect organization; but such are the effects of habitual diffidence and extreme delicacy of feeling, it may happen, when there is a necessity

of acting in concert with others, that improvements, of which all may perceive the utility, none will have courage to propose. Wherever this species of reserve predominates, it will be found by all who have candour to acknowledge the fact, that the meeting of a committee of managers is seldom productive of any real benefits to the interests of the institution, whose interests all are nevertheless equally zealous to promote.

If these habits of diffidence operate in communicating with each other, it may easily be imagined, that where gentlemen are ostensibly at the head of the institution, and therefore necessarily to be consulted at every step, they will operate yet more powerfully. The benefit of superintendence will therefore, in such cases, be completely lost. But is the interference and sanction of the patrons necessary? Is it in these enlightened times to be supposed, that women of

good sense and good education are so incompetent to judge or to act, that the choice and application of proper means for the education of their own sex cannot properly be committed to them? But the ladies will have it so. They are anxious to be disburdened of the weight of responsibility. And do they actually become less responsible, from being thus furnished with an apology for leaving undone the things which they ought to have done, and which they perceived it absolutely necessary for the good of the establishment to do?

If the benefits which would otherwise arise from the active exertions of the patronesses are liable to be circumscribed, by the timidity which imposes a restraint on the expression of sentiment and the freedom of action, it is surely unwise to subject them to additional restraints, as from the respect habitually entertained for the opinions

of their superiors in knowledge, interference will, in this instance, be equivalent to complete control.

Supposing, then, that in the choice of means the ladies are left to the free exercise of their own judgment, the first thing that will naturally occur to their consideration is the nature of the object which they are to endeavour by their united efforts to accomplish. It is no other than to effect such a radical improvement in the intellect, temper, and dispositions of the hundreds of children who may be assembled under the same roof, as will, when converted into habits, render them good and useful members of society, promote their interests in this world, and lead to the attainment of everlasting happiness in the world to come. No one can suppose, that it is by teaching them to read, and write, and work with their needles, that this is to be accomplished, though, in the course of teaching these arts,

much towards its accomplishment may be done. But, before we inquire how this may be effected, it is necessary, after having agreed on what ought, if possible, to be accomplished, to take a view of the obstacles to be encountered, not only as they exist generally in human nature, but as they have been increased and modified by impressions to which the pupils have in general been exposed. Let it then be asked, what is the nature of those impressions? Are they favourable to quickness of apprehension; to docility; to accuracy, attended by the love of order and regularity; to cheerful activity in the performance of duty; to complacency of temper, and kindness of heart? Or is there any reason to believe, that the impressions they have previously received are in their nature highly unfavourable to the production of these qualities? These questions will be easily answered by any one fa-

miliarly acquainted with the manners and habits that generally prevail among that description of persons of whose children the pupils are mostly composed.

Are these characterized by the accuracy which evinces quickness of perception, or by the inaccurate and imperfect observation displayed in an utter disregard to cleanliness and order? If in the latter, we may depend upon it, that the female offspring of such mothers have had but little chance of acquiring that quick discernment, which can only be produced by an early exercise of the powers of perception. Again,—

The mothers may be chaste, sober, and industrious, but are they in general possessed of any just notions of their maternal duties? Do they inculcate on their children, from the first dawn of life, the necessity of implicit obedience; thus teaching them by times to curb the impetuosity of self-will, and laying the

foundation for that precious docility which converts the labour of instruction into pleasure? If, in place of this, they in general pursue the very opposite plan, of fostering every embryo passion by complete indulgence, and then souring and irritating the tempers they have thus spoiled, till the dispositions are rendered ungracious and ungrateful, the obstacles to that improvement of the intellectual and moral powers which it has been proposed to accomplish, will be indeed extremely serious.

But, though serious, they are not insurmountable. Even if, in addition to the obstacles created by injudicious management, we were to find that immoral habits had been contracted, such as falsehood, very commonly connected with sloth and disobedience; still there is no just reason for despair. If we have but courage to persevere in the application of the proper remedies, we shall

soon restore what is wanting; and correct what is amiss.

The improvement of the heart and understanding, though spoken of separately, must in practice go hand in hand. While, therefore, we willingly subscribe to all the praise bestowed on the utility of the methods of teaching introduced by Dr Bell and Mr Lancaster, as tending to produce an increase of intelligence; we must carefully examine how far either of these methods tend to develop and improve the affections of the heart, before we can with propriety place on either of them our sole dependence for the production of all possible good.

I have attempted to show, that schools upon either plan, if they happen to be imperfectly organized, or negligently conducted, will fail of producing those effects for which they are chiefly calculated. To this it may be added, that as the education of boys may be supposed

to have been principally in contemplation with those by whom these systems were introduced, we must not be surprised if we find, that, in applying them to the education of girls, they must be in some degree modified before they can be productive of much advantage. In proof of this, at some schools for girls, conducted on the Lancastrian model, it has been found necessary to procure monitors from the boys' schools established in the same place; no girl in the school appearing to be endowed with the requisite qualities. Whence this incapacity? From nature? No; merely from the operation of previous circumstances, which had been more favourable to the exercise of the faculties in one sex than in the other.

Is it not obvious, that in such cases the first thing to be done is to endeavour to rouse those dormant faculties, and bring them gradually into exercise?

And here the assistance to be derived, even from a partial adoption of Pestalozzi's plan, becomes apparent. Stupid as those little girls may appear; they are not altogether destitute of ideas. It is possible, that of the few ideas they possess, none may be at all connected with those presented in their first school exercise; but if they have learned to speak, and know the names of the common objects around them, they may, by an attentive observation of these objects, be led to the acquirement of new ideas, till, step by step, they arrive at those in the want of which their apparent stupidity originated. A schoolmistress who would willingly act upon this principle, would be an invaluable acquisition. But considering the confined education usually received by those who have been brought up to the business of tuition, and the pride and pedantry which are so apt to encrust the narrow mind, from the

exercise of a "little brief authority," it would be unwise to expect from persons in that situation any thing beyond common attention to prescribed forms. On a knowledge of these forms, and a punctual observance of the customary ceremonies, they may safely be allowed to pique themselves; but when additional means are to be resorted to, it is not to persons incapable of comprehending their aim, or of perceiving their utility, that the application of them can with propriety be entrusted.

Supposing the adoption of Pestalozzi's method of improving intellect to be deemed desirable. As of the managers of the institution none may have it in their power to devote the requisite portion of time and attention to the experiment, it at first view seems impossible, that independently of the schoolmistress the design can be effected. But let us

not too hastily conclude on its impossibility.

Wherever the population is such as to render the establishment of schools on an extended scale necessary or practicable, the number of genteel families must bear a certain proportion to the number of the poor; and, happily, the contagion of frivolity and dissipation has not as yet been permitted to extend so far its baleful influence, as to preclude all hope of finding, in the younger branches of the families of condition, able and useful auxiliaries, by whose assistance the plan may be completely executed in all its parts.

Notwithstanding the incessant demands made on their time and attention, in the acquirement of accomplishments on which fashion has set an imaginary value, the young ladies of the present age are not so entirely engrossed by what can only serve the purposes of tem-

porary embellishment, as to have neither time nor attention to bestow on higher objects. Never at any period were the hearts of the young more prompt to feel; and never, surely, were their benevolent impulses more frequently or more effectually directed into the channel of real usefulness.

On a consideration of these facts it will appear, that the superior managers may without difficulty find, among the young ladies of their acquaintance, a sufficient number of assistants, on whom the introduction of Pestalozzi's method of instruction may with propriety devolve. Nor let the latter imagine, that they are by youth and inexperience disqualified for the task. The obstacle arising from inexperience is in its nature temporary: and their extreme youth, instead of presenting an obstacle, will be found highly propitious to their success. It is indeed the very circumstance on

which the hopes of success are chiefly grounded; for it has been clearly proved from experience, that to the minds of the young it is the young alone who have free and ready access; and that hearts which were apparently callous have been spontaneously opened by sympathy. From my own knowledge I can aver, that where very young ladies have been induced to lend their assistance to the teacher of a charity-school, it has been seen, that the rudeness which had heretofore resisted all attempts at polish, the obstinacy which persuasion could not move, nor punishment subdue, and the habits of idleness and inattention, which had been rendered inveterate by early indulgence, have, without much effort on the part of the youthful instructors, so quickly yielded, as to afford convincing proof of the ease with which the young and amiable can mould the cha-

racter and dispositions of those who are but a little younger than themselves.

The efficacy of Pestalozzi's method of instruction is here at once explained and illustrated. Whence came it to pass, that the young, on the example given above, were enabled so readily to mould the dispositions and affections of their little pupils? Was it by cogent arguments or lessons fraught with peculiar wisdom? No. It is simply to their having unconsciously acted upon the principle adopted by Pestalozzi, that their success is to be ascribed. If their lessons produced any manifest improvement on the temper and dispositions of the heart, it was because they applied directly to the heart, to whose sympathy their youth and endearing gentleness gave ready access. To a similar cause the effectual development of the mental faculties in their pupils may be fairly traced. They spoke not, even to the most ignorant or

stupid, in language above their comprehension; but, conforming to the state of their minds, laid hold on what they knew, as a foundation whence each was made to start in the progress to farther acquisitions, until the powers of the understanding were, step by step, unfolded and strengthened. All this was done without attention to any plan or theory, but it was (though unwittingly) done upon that principle on which every plan or theory of education ought to be founded—an adherence to the laws of nature. As in the material world we find it impossible to change the form of any object, without coming in direct contact with the object on which we wish to effect an alteration; so, in the intellectual world, is it impossible to produce improvement, but by a direct application to the powers which are to be improved. Hence the advantage of applying to the minds of the young, through

the medium of minds to which theirs can most easily assimilate. In Bell's and Lancaster's systems this advantage is, or at least may be, in some degree obtained. But where the instruction communicated from child to child extends only to the method of performing certain external acts, and where a facility in such performance is deemed the primary or sole object of education, this mode of teaching may be attended with serious evil, operating in one party as an excitement to the feelings of arrogance and self-conceit, and producing in the other the feelings of envy, mortification, or resentment. The monitor whose zeal has been stimulated by vanity, instead of kindly assisting his school-fellows in getting over the steps he has himself so lately passed, will be seen immediately to ape the master, and assuming all the airs, and practising all the grimaces which he conceives to be ex-

pressive of the dignity of command, will issue his orders in a tone of authority, and express his displeasure with asperity and contempt.

Children may thus teach children the method of performing a given task, to the great ease and satisfaction of the teacher, whose labour is, by the employment of subalterns, so much abridged; but by those who appreciate the benefits of instruction by its tendency to improve the mind and heart, it will appear, that the most important of the advantages that might be derived from making the young instruct the young are, in such cases nearly lost. Heartily as we concur in the generous wish expressed by our revered Monarch, and ardently as we may desire to see the gates of knowledge opened to all without reserve, we cannot but think that it is of still greater importance to the community, that that part of the population for whose use the

schools in question have been established, should derive from them the benefit arising from an improvement of the rational faculties, and a cultivation of the moral principles of our nature, than that they should acquire in them the elements of learning, and be left to the guidance of chance or circumstances, under whose blind direction their acquirements may be converted into instruments of good or evil.

It is admitted on all hands, that even in the ordinary routine of school tuition, the mental faculties are in some degree improved; but there is good reason to believe, that the improvement is far more limited than it would be, if the cultivation of the powers of the understanding were made an object of attention. The progress of children would not then be estimated by their ability to perform what they have seen performed by others, but by the clearness and accu-

racy of their ideas on all they have been taught. The competence of teachers of either sex would not then be estimated according to their knowledge of the methods practised in this or that school, but according as they were found more or less capable of communicating clear ideas to the minds of their pupils; and, of all methods of teaching, that by which such accurate notions were most certainly to be obtained, would, in every instance, be preferred. That this has not always been the case, will I presume be acknowledged. Great improvements have certainly been made, but we have not yet reached the point beyond which improvement is impossible.

In order to give a just notion of the different effects which are produced upon the mind by different modes of instruction in any given branch of education, it will be sufficient to place before the reader a view of some of the different

methods that have been adopted in teaching the first rules of arithmetic.

According to the notions that long and generally prevailed, it was deemed a sufficient foundation for knowledge in the science, to teach children to repeat by rote the names or signs of numbers from one to one thousand, or upwards. They were then, though with some difficulty, taught to distinguish and to name the corresponding figures, and to divide them into units, tens, hundreds, &c. This last was the only part of the process in which clear ideas were necessarily communicated to the pupil's mind. He was made to perceive and understand, that a figure placed singly was denominated an unit, that a figure added to the left was a ten, and so forth; but though, by practice, he was enabled quickly to pronounce to what class any figure in the line belonged, it was the words which he had named by rote that afforded him the

key, and to these he was obliged constantly to have recourse. The rules which he was compelled to commit to memory successively at every step as he advanced, were composed in terms utterly beyond his comprehension; and as they were never explained to him, he gained nothing by repeating them but an exercise of memory. Ideas upon the subject might be accidentally acquired, and where a notion of the advantages to be derived from a knowledge of arithmetic had been early impressed upon the mind, they would be sought for and obtained. But where there was no such stimulus to exertion, all must have been performed mechanically; and as whatever is not clearly understood is soon forgotten, we need not be surprised, that of the numbers who have thus been taught the art of cyphering, without any clear notions respecting the principles on which they worked, so few should have retain-

ed any of the little they at school acquired.

Let us now proceed to examine another and better method. According to this improved method, the novices acquire at once a knowledge of the names and forms of the numerical signs, by tracing the figures in sand. Supposing the class to consist of twelve children, the first lesson in addition is given as follows.—The child at the head is asked by the teacher, what are two and two? If he professes ignorance, the question is put to the next, and repeated to each in his turn, till one, more knowing than his fellows, gives the proper answer. He is of course promoted, and from the place of dignity at the head of the class proclaims, that *two and two are four*; which words are repeated aloud by every individual in the little group. The teacher then proceeds to another question, which is in like manner solved by some

one of the circle, and the discovery in like manner repeated as an axiom by the others.

Now here it may be observed, that though the child who has promptly told that two and two are four, or that two and three are five, has evinced that he possessed a clear and accurate notion of the relative powers of those numbers, it is to be questioned, whether, of the eleven who repeated his words, there be one to whose mind any idea was conveyed by the words repeated. In the instance adduced, it may perhaps be deemed of little consequence. But when we consider, that the same method is applied to the greater purposes of religious instruction, and that that knowledge of the meaning of all that is read in every Bible-lesson, extraordinary as it in some instances appears, must, in fact, (when this method prevails), be limited to certain individuals, its importance will wear a more

serious aspect. But to proceed to a third method of teaching arithmetic, the method employed by Pestalozzi.—

Knowing that the first notion of numbers must necessarily be obtained through the medium of the external senses, it is by objects adapted to the senses of sight and touch, and not by words alone, that he gives the first ideas upon the subject to the infant mind. The teacher, taking a handful of beans, (or what else he chuses to use as counters), gives one to each of the little pupils placed round his table. This each lays before him, and pronounces to be *one bean*. Another *one* is then given, and the first and second *one* are placed together, and, when thus united, assume the name of *two*. Another *one* bean is added, and the whole put together become *three*. This process is continued until all are capable of distinctly counting to the number ten. Each is then desired to

take from his heap two beans, and having placed them together on the table, puts then other two down at a small distance, and having named the separate quantities, two and two, is made to join them together; and if his notion of numbers obtained in the former part of the exercise has been sufficiently accurate, he will easily, by the exertion of his own perceptions, be enabled to give to the number its appropriate term. In this way a distinct notion of all the combinations of which the units are susceptible is introduced. A knowledge of the figures which are the signs of numbers is next given. And then, again, by means of counters, which answer for tens, and the beans, which have represented units, the process is carried forward as far as may be found necessary. All the rules of arithmetic are taught by Pestalozzi on the same principle. I say nothing of his tables, and other contriv-

ances for facilitating his purpose, as such apparatus, however useful, are by no means essential to the communication of clear ideas, which is the primary object in view.

So seldom, however, does this object enter into the contemplation of teachers, it would not occasion me any surprise to find, that among the numbers who, at the schools established on the new systems, seem in this branch of education to have made astonishing progress, there were nevertheless many, who, notwithstanding their adroitness in working questions in arithmetic, would, from want of clear ideas upon the subject, be extremely puzzled by the simplest proposition, if put in a form differing from that to which they had been accustomed. I know this to have been the case in one instance;—the amiable and excellent young men, to whose benevolence the school owed its existence,

having given it as a reason for discontinuing the Lancastrian method of teaching multiplication.

But where no clear ideas have been given at the commencement, it is impossible that any method which the art of man can devise should be attended with complete success. A child may be taught to climb a ladder, and when he has reached the top, he will see the objects that are there presented to his view; but if you take away the intermediate steps, can you suppose, because of his having learned glibly to repeat after you the names of objects seen from such a height, that he has actually made a leap from the bottom of the ladder to the top, from which alone the objects are distinctly visible? This, however, absurd as it may appear, has frequently been practised in education.

To this practice the universal adoption of Pestalozzi's principle would put

a final period. In girls' schools it would, for reasons before stated, be highly advisable in the application of that principle, to employ those of the same sex, not yet so far advanced in years as to lose the advantage derived from sympathy, but so much superior in rank and education to the little pupils, as to excite respect.

Let us now, anticipating the adoption of the plan, suppose a sufficient number of young ladies ready to co-operate with their more experienced friends in the work of charity; whether the school be divided into four classes, or into six or eight, it makes little difference as to the number requisite, provided there be enough to secure the regular attendance of two for one hour of every school day. If ten or twelve young ladies are appointed, it will indeed be highly advisable that besides the two who are to act the week or month, the two next in s

cession should attend as spectators of what is going forward, that they may be able to begin where the others leave off, and thus, while all will be in turn initiated into the duties of their office, a provision will be made for supplying the place of either of the officiating visitors, if accidentally absent.

The first week may with great propriety be devoted to observing the manner in which the school is conducted, and the behaviour of the children generally, and in each particular class. All the young ladies may, during this period of observation, attend together, and communicate to each other the result of their remarks on the proofs of attention exhibited by the monitors, and of docility and intelligence in the scholars. As they will probably view with feelings of compassion the little creatures whose languid looks offer certain indication of weariness and disgust, it is in

the first class that they will naturally desire to commence their operations.

With the consent of the mistress, (to whom due respect ought ever to be paid), the two acting visitors will then proceed to release the little ones from the confinement of the form, and, in kindly terms, propose to them a round of questions. Of this it must, in order to overcome a formidable obstacle, be made a primary condition, that whoever refuses to answer, or speaks too low to be heard, shall be subjected to some of the forfeits in use among children when at play with each other. All this will, of course, be done in playfulness and good humour. The exercise being intended for the improvement of the power of observation, it is to the shape and structure of objects of sight that the questions will of course refer. Of such questions examples are given, in Nos. 1st, 2d, and 3d, of the Appen-

dix. These may be increased and amplified at pleasure to any extent. And as quickness and accuracy of perception cannot be too sedulously cultivated, nothing that can tend to its cultivation is to be rejected. The child who, before it has been taught to form a letter, has been rendered capable of instantly discerning the difference between a straight and an oblique line, will certainly possess an advantage over her who is incapable of such discrimination. And here the use of a writing slate and pencil may be brought into play with great advantage. Of two lines drawn across, the one straight, the other diverging, though in a slight degree, it may be proposed as a question, Who shall first observe and describe the difference?*

* As an early attention to personal cleanliness may justly be considered among the lower orders as a desideratum, it would, perhaps, at some schools, be very

As soon as the children have completely entered into the spirit of the thing, the quickest will be able to put new questions to the less observant, and when they return to their task of forming letters in sand, the effects of having had their observation thus excited will soon be discernible. If the mode in which the class is taught be not (as it often is) unfavourable to all mental excitement, they will not so speedily arrive at the point of weariness, as they may hitherto have been accustomed to do.

The children in the next immediate classes, though respectively advanced in what is called their education, may possibly be found little superior to infants in observation and discernment. The questions put to them will quickly

eligible to commence every exercise by a show of hands, and the question, Whose is cleanest?

lead to a discovery of their usual habits of attention, and consequent state of their minds. Obtuse as many may appear to be, a great inequality will soon be perceptible. Those who can spontaneously answer every question, may with propriety be made to lend assistance, and encouraged to exercise their memory and judgment in contriving queries, respecting the shape, colour, situation, and appearance of objects which all have had equal opportunity to see, but which few may have observed with sufficient attention to be able to describe. Accuracy in the description of objects, ought never to be dispensed with, nor ought extreme accuracy ever to pass without notice, and proofs of high approbation. It ought to be set forth, not merely as the servant, but the parent and companion of truth; and habitual inaccuracy, on the other hand, held up to contempt and detestation, as the prolific source of

falsehood. This may, however, be done accidentally, and without the formality of set speeches; for in the course of these preliminary exercises, many opportunities must occur for placing the value of accuracy in a proper point of view.

How long these exercises are to be continued, or how frequently repeated, must be left to the judgment of the young officiators, who, as they become more intimately acquainted with the minds of the pupils, will be able distinctly to perceive the nature of the defects under which they labour. In forming a judgment upon this point, they will derive much assistance from an attentive observation of the conduct of the monitors, or sub-teachers, whose incompetence, whenever they appear incompetent, will be found to arise from slowness and inaccuracy of perception. The only remedy for this disorder is, to direct the attention to external objects

until habits of quick discernment are acquired. If, without having had any opportunity of improving in observation, they have been compelled exclusively to direct their attention to the forms of letters and the sounds of syllables, we may reasonably expect, that the defect in their powers of perception will have thereby been increased, instead of having been diminished. Hence it appears to be a great error in chusing monitors, to consider those as most eligible to the office, who have made greatest progress in what is taught in the class in which they are to act as sub-teachers. It is not the girl who is the best reader or best speller of the class, but she who evinces quickest discernment, and whose eye and ear are most capable of nice discrimination, and whose attention is most exertive, that will be found most competent to the office. She who is thus endowed, will, in teaching others, make

rapid advances in improving herself. The girl of sluggish perceptions will, on the contrary, prove useless to others, and at the same time, from want of practice, lose the facility which practice had produced.

It will therefore be attended with manifest benefit to the institution, if the young ladies, after having obtained, from the observations made in the course of these preliminary exercises, some knowledge of the talents and capacities of the children in each class, make out a list of the most intelligent, from which the managers may select sub-teachers for the ensuing month. In a school organized upon the Lancastrian system, it is to the conduct of the monitors that the attention of the mistress is chiefly directed. If they perform their duty, instruction must be communicated to all without any interference on her part. But before they can act with propriety, they

must have a clear notion of what they are to do; and if the number be considerable, it will be difficult for one person to set all the wheels in motion.. In initiating these new monitors into the duties of office, the mistress will derive great assistance from the young ladies, provided she has the wisdom to avail herself of that assistance.

The method originally practised in the Borough school, of making the children work, and exhibit their performances in pairs, seemed admirably calculated for giving activity to emulation; by concentrating its energy; while, at the same time, by the sudden transitions from the joy of success to the mortification of failure, and the good humour, and even playfulness, which accompanied the transient rivalry, no opportunity was afforded to the indulgence of envy.

Let us suppose that the method alluded to is adopted, and that the young

ladies are to lend their assistance to the mistress in initiating the new monitors in the duties of office. Beginning with her who is to preside over the little ones in the first class, they will inform her, that she will now have an opportunity to show, whether she is indeed capable of taking notice of what is before her; for that her duty is not comprised in loudly vociferating the word *prepare!* nor in smoothing down the sand with energetic risk, services which may be performed by her deputy, but that, as monitor of the class, she is, when the signal has been given, to observe that all attend to the note of preparation; and when she sees that every little hand is put into the proper posture, she is then with audible voice to pronounce the letter of the alphabet hung out for a copy; and as soon as the first pair have announced, by a distinct repetition of the sound of the letter, that they have traced

its form on the sand, she will look at the performance of the rival candidates, and place her finger on that which she deems to be the best. Thus going from pair to pair, she will quickly pronounce on the performances of all. But as, at the conclusion of every exercise, she will be liable to have her judgments examined by the mistress or visitors, she must always be prepared to give a reason for her decisions.

This will suffice as a specimen of the manner in which the ceremony is to be conducted, and which, if properly conducted, will afford to the monitor such increased opportunity of exercising her powers of discernment and discrimination as will prove to her a very solid and permanent advantage.

It must however be remembered, that the monitor is herself a child, and that nature, whose laws we profess to observe, has not seen fit to bestow on little chil-

dren the power of giving attention for any length of time to the same object. It is in vain that we attempt to oppose this decree of nature; yet fruitless as the opposition has ever proved to be, it has been carried on from generation to generation, by the race of pedagogues, who see no reason why infants should not be compelled to fret whole hours upon the form, even at that early period, when to give attention beyond a few minutes is perhaps impossible. Would it not be better to watch the moment in which all seem to arrive at that point when weariness commences; and be it sooner or later than the usual hour of breaking up, consider it as a signal for setting the little prisoners free? After a few minutes relaxation, they will begin with avidity to something new. Pestalozzi's method of teaching the rudiments of the art of calculation, may here be with great advantage introduced in alter-

nation; and they will thus, instead of spending half their school hours in listless inactivity, be gaining in every moment some addition to their little stock of ideas.

It may be thought that I have dwelt too long on this first class, which is generally considered as of least importance. To me, however, it appears in a very different light, and seems to demand the greatest attention. In proportion to the pains bestowed in giving to these tender saplings their proper bent, will the school, in process of time, be distinguished as a nursery of virtue.

Much, however, of what has been said with regard to the duties of the monitor in the first class, will apply with little variation to the monitors of the other classes. They who severally superintend the classes employed in writing, or cyphering on slates, must learn, that they have something to do besides ordering

the slates to be raised or lowered, and listening to the long protracted clatter. It is indeed their business to see that the order is obeyed with prompt celerity, for it is on its tendency to give habits of prompt obedience (these again depending on habits of attention) that the utility of the noisy ceremony alluded to solely rests. Those, therefore, who do not make the required movement with promptitude, ought to be detained after the others on breaking up the class, not as a punishment, but in order to acquire by practice the habit in which they are deficient. As, according to the system adopted, progress in the arts of reading and writing go hand in hand, the monitor ought, of course, in chusing the words to be written, to restrict herself to words of one, two, or three syllables, in conformity to the nature of the attainment of the class in reading. Nor should any one be permitted to write a

word which she cannot at first sight pronounce. To this the monitor ought very particularly to attend, as nothing can be more absurd than to see children scrawling long words, which they neither understand nor can articulate.

When the children exhibit what they have written, the monitor will begin by examining the writing of the senior pair, and, awarding the mark of approbation to the best of those two competitors, will proceed in like manner to examine the performance of the remainder of the class, which she will soon, from custom, be enabled to accomplish without loss of time. When of two competitors one very evidently excels the other, a separation should take place, that each may be matched with an equal, in order to keep up that moderate spirit of emulation which it is of so much consequence to preserve. And as the diligent, even when their efforts are not immediately

successful, are by no means to be disheartened, the change of partners should never be held up in the light of a disgrace, but as an encouragement to fresh exertion. Thus the slow will again enter the lists with the alacrity of revived hope, and finally obtain the reward of their perseverance.

It is not enough that the decisions of the monitor be just; their justice must be rendered apparent to the whole class, by her readiness to explain the reasons on which they are founded. Why do you think my partner's word better written than mine?" may a little girl ask her monitor; "Because," it may be replied, "your letters, though equally well formed, are placed at more unequal distances. Correct that fault, and yours may perhaps next time be the best." All this may be said with gentle voice and friendly accent, very different from that bold and brawling manner, so frequently as-

sumed by monitors as belonging to their office.

As, in the process of acquiring the art of writing, the perceptions, with regard to objects of sight in general, may be considerably improved, the best method of teaching the art is evidently that which more effectually conduces to this most desirable end. Hence a decided preference becomes due to the mode first introduced to practice by Lancaster. The great economy of using slates rather than paper is but a secondary consideration. It is in being calculated to increase, in the proportion of ten to one, the exercise which, in the acquirement of the art of writing, is given to the perceptions, that it becomes most truly valuable. But if these advantages never enter into the mind of those by whom the school is conducted, they will in all probability be lost.

The exercise which writing affords to the eye, reading gives to the power of hearing. Those who have never learned to read, cannot easily discriminate the different sounds of words, to which their ears have not been long familiar. Those who, in learning to read, have never been taught to pay any attention to this difference, are nearly in the same predicament. Hence the false tones, the sing-song, the intolerable monotony with which good sense is sometimes disgraced in the delivery. "But we do not wish to make fine readers of our school girls." No, we do not wish them to read *fine*; but as they are to be taught to read, there seems no good reason why they should not be taught to read well. To read well, they must be taught to give to every letter, and to every word, its proper sound; which they cannot do until their ear has been enabled to discriminate between

sound and sound, however slight the variation. Here Bell's method of instruction seems to possess, in some respects, an advantage over Lancaster's; and as its advantages consist simply in more carefully exercising the attention on the various sounds of which the letters are susceptible, when combined in syllables, it may be adopted in Lancastrian schools without any change of apparatus. As soon as children are acquainted with the alphabet, and capable of tracing all the letters upon sand, they may proceed in like manner to trace syllables of two letters. But here the monitor will have a new call on her attention. She must observe that every syllable, before it is written, be accurately and distinctly pronounced: The same after it is written; and as soon as the first column of the first syllable card has thus been gone over, the children should

be re-examined by the monitor of a superior class.

In spelling and reading words consisting of one syllable, they should for some time be confined, in practice, to lessons presenting words unconnected with each other in sense. Nor until they have by reiterated practice obtained the power of pronouncing all monosyllable words at sight, should they be permitted to read any composition which (in words of that class) is intended either to amuse the fancy or convey instruction to the mind. Even when they advance to polysyllable exercises, it will be found of great importance to accuracy, to continue the same mode of practice, until they are so familiarized with words of that length, as to be able at once to resolve them into the syllables of which they are composed. Those who are promoted, from reading words, without connexion, to reading monosyllable lessons,

ought, at the commencement, to be admonished by the monitor to give their attention to the sense; and, in order to enforce attention, at every full stop, some ought to be questioned on the meaning of the sentence last read. Habits of attention will thus be imperceptibly acquired, and the reading lesson be made of real use in affording some degree of exercise to the understanding. While one part of the day is destined to reading lessons of instruction, an equal portion of time may be devoted to reading and spelling unconnected words of two or three syllables in length. This will prevent the weariness arising from continued application to the same object; and if we exact at one time attention to the combinations of letters forming syllables, and to the combination of syllables in words; and at another, and after some interval, direct attention to the sense and purport of what they have thus been

enabled to read without hesitation, we shall soon find the advantage in the increased rapidity of their progress.

Let any of us who are not familiar with the Roman character, take up a book printed in what is called black letter, and we shall soon be convinced of the consequence of having our attention distracted between two objects, namely, the alphabetical character, and the sense of the author.

What a black letter book would be to most of us, such is every book to children, until they have by practice been rendered familiar with the characters, and have acquired such knowledge of the combination of letters, as is essential to enable them to read with ease. How limited, how very superficial, then, must that instruction be, which is picked up in the course of decyphering, and spelling, and pronouncing certain lessons selected from the sacred volume.

Is it on the efficacy of such lessons that we rely for the cultivation of piety and benevolence? or do we imagine that any knowledge of the doctrines or duties of Christianity will be thus obtained, to serve as a guide to the conduct in future life?

But admitting that farther instruction is to be afterwards given, there are other and potent objections to the too common practice of teaching children to speak and read on passages selected from holy writ, containing maxims of piety and wisdom. How painful is the effect produced upon the listener, who must in this case be doomed to hear the sense frequently perverted, to a degree that almost amounts to blasphemy. The effect upon the hearer is only transient, and may therefore be disregarded. But of the effect of the distorted images that may then be presented to the infant mind, no

one capable of reflection can think lightly.

Fables and little stories made for children may, as first lessons, be deemed less objectionable. But when the attention is thus early directed to the meaning, before the eye and ear have been practised on the combinations of letters composing words, the pupil will acquire the habit of pronouncing from analogy, and then, in whatever he afterwards reads, trusting to his own notion of the sense, he will be liable to perpetual blunders. In persons to whom the attainment of the art of reading is but the commencement of education, this error will soon be corrected, but when education goes no farther, it is of the highest importance to guard against it, as otherwise, little profit will be made of the little all of instruction, in after life.

From first to last, then, throughout every stage of the progressive lessons, a

thorough acquaintance with the words of each respective description should invariably precede the lesson whose meaning is intended to convey instruction. A strict examination concerning the clearness and accuracy of the ideas that have thus been conveyed, ought as invariably to follow; and in conducting this examination, those who are advanced some steps beyond the class examined, may with great advantage be employed.

A sedulous attention to the conduct of the monitors, in their several departments, will for some time be indispensable. But if some pains have been taken to awaken and exercise the perceptions, it will soon be seen, that an increased activity and quickness of discernment has been the happy consequence, and that the monitors, when properly instructed in their duty, will no longer appear vacant and unconcerned

spectators of what is going forward in their respective classes.

I say nothing of needle-work, for to that branch of education the schoolmistress seldom fails to give the requisite attention : And though I consider it as necessary to women in every station, and more particularly essential to the middling and lower classes, to be able to work quickly and neatly with the needle, the knowledge of any art appears to my mind a secondary consideration, when placed in comparison with that cultivation of the moral and intellectual faculties, which is essential to the performance of every duty. The art of sewing may indeed be rendered conducive to the cultivation of that accuracy of observation, of which I have endeavoured to show the benefit. But as it is an imitative art, it is only while attention to the thing to be imitated is requisite, that it affords any sensible exercise to the per-

ceptions. The art, once acquired, may be performed almost mechanically; and on this very account is frequently resorted to by persons whose minds are incapable of exertion, and who, while thus apparently busied, are in fact only indulging their natural indolence.

The indolence which arises, and is inseparable from slowness of perception, is to females in the inferior walks of life the most fruitful source of calamity and vice. As all effort is painful, the woman who does not habitually notice what is before her eyes, will never be active but when excited to exertion, either by the fear of suffering, or by some other powerful impulse. While the excitement lasts she may show herself capable of a quick performance of every active duty; but no sooner is it withdrawn than she will sink into wonted torpor. If it is from the gratification of any of the selfish passions, as pride, or vanity, that she has

been accustomed to derive the impulse to exertion, that passion will, by indulgence, gain the ascendancy in her breast; and render her less and less inclined to pay attention to those minute, but to her uninteresting matters, which constitute in detail the sum of domestic occupation. Perpetual neglect and perpetual forgetfulness will be the never-failing consequence. If employed to work for others, she will have recourse to invention, to excuse, or account for, the negligence of which she has been guilty, and thus become habituated to falsehood. If mistress of a family, her house will be a scene of dirtiness and confusion; nor will she compensate by the most intense application to her needle, for the waste and discomfort occasioned by habitual inattention to other objects. Without undervaluing instruction in needle-work, we may safely consider it as a secondary object, while we bend our endeavour to-

wards producing that improvement on the mind and heart, which are truly essential to the future well-being.

If experience has proved, that the means usually resorted to, for effecting a radical improvement on the affections and dispositions of the heart, have not fully answered the end proposed; it will be proper to examine the nature of the means employed, in order to discover the cause of failure. These generally consist of certain restrictions and injunctions, enforced, like other laws, by the sanction of rewards and punishments. Such reliance is in some instances placed on the influence of bribes and penalties, that they are made use of at every step, and are avowedly the prime agents of government. Of their effects in exciting attention, and in producing an external conformity to all the laws of discipline, we have, in some of the schools alluded to, most ample proof;

and, were elementary schools intended for no other purpose than that of diffusing a knowledge of the arts of reading and writing, all objection must be silenced. When the wills of many are to be controlled, and governed, and taught implicit subjection to the will of a superior, in order to unite the efforts of numbers to a given purpose, every rule must necessarily be absolute, and its authority supported by the dread of corporal punishment, or the no less appalling terror of disgrace. Thus it is in the navy and army. But there a punctual performance of the prescribed duty is all that the most rigid disciplinarian requires. His views extend not beyond the external action. If he succeeds in securing implicit obedience to his commands, he cares not though the powers of hell were to revel in the heart.

But at schools, where the improvement not only of the mental faculties, but of

the dispositions and affections of the heart, are objects of prime consideration, the case is widely different. Here the effects produced by the terrors of punishment will not be estimated by the degree in which they produce external conformity, but as they are productive of radical improvement on the dispositions. That it ought in no case to be resorted to, I will not take upon me to aver; but in a well regulated school, as in a well regulated family, I am persuaded, that the necessity of resorting to punishment will very rarely occur, and that, when it does occur, if the punishment be not modified so as to influence the motives by which the offender has been actuated, it will produce no permanent effect.

A profuse distribution of rewards may, at first view, appear less objectionable, but, on closer examination, it will perhaps be seen, that, as means of effecting a radical improvement on the mind and

dispositions, the system of rewards is little better adapted to our purpose than the system of punishments.

That premiums operate as an excitement to the performance of tasks, will not be denied. But whether this excitement be of a wholesome nature, or whether it be in fact injurious, may still be questioned. Before deciding *pro* or *con*, it will be necessary to ascertain on which of the active powers the excitement operates. Is it pride, or vanity, or ambition, or any other of the selfish passions, that are thus roused into action? If it is from the increased activity of these passions that we derive the fruits of increased exertion, we cannot surely hesitate to pronounce, that they have been too dearly purchased.

It will, moreover, be observed, that the exertion which is prompted by the desire of procuring gratification to any of the passions, is desultory and transient;

very opposite in its nature to that quiet and persevering spirit of industry, which, especially to those who are destined to live by the labour of their hands, is of the last importance. But farther,—

Considering that the beings in whom we are interested may never, through life, have such an opportunity of acquiring just notions and solid principles as that which they at school enjoy, it is of great consequence that we should not, by our conduct, tend to mislead their minds, by embuing them with false notions, and false expeétations. Where rewards are prodigally bestowed, this cannot fail to be the case. Children who are taught to look to an immediate recompense for every common exertion, will naturally learn to expect, that reward should always attend the performance of duty, and will despise the virtue whose hands are not loaded with bribes. Little need is there, in the present state of things,

of giving an increased activity to the spirit of selfishness ! Better and wiser would it be to endeavour, by every means in our power, to impress the minds of the young with just notions of the value of character, as ensuring the just and appropriate rewards of esteem and approbation. None can shut their eyes to the deplorable consequences resulting to our sex, in the inferior walks of life, from the want of an early and habitual regard to reputation ; or from an indifference to the opinion entertained of their dispositions and conduct, in every instance where self-interest is not immediately concerned ; and were it certain that, by a liberal distribution of premiums, we were exciting in their minds such a desire of praise-worthiness, as might in time produce in that order, generally, a more delicate sense of character, we should be justified in carrying the system to extremes. But if, as there

is much reason to apprehend, it be only the love of praise that at the very best is thus produced, we must remember, that the passion to which we thus give activity, may seek its gratification in the praise of the worthless, as well as in the praise of the worthy.

That those who have by their good conduct recommended themselves to esteem, should, before leaving school, receive some substantial mark of approbation, is highly proper, and may be attended with the best effects. The character of the young person will then be in some degree established, and the reward sanctioned by general consent, for all will perceive that it is bestowed according to justice. Very different is the case when premiums are awarded on the report of monitors and teachers, whose verdict is frequently rash, and liable to be perverted by partiality or prejudice. Should it, though even groundlessly, be

suspected of being so by the children of the class, the consequences of such suspicion will to them be injurious, for it will excite in their breasts the feelings of jealousy and discontent. From these considerations we must infer, that rewards, as well as punishments, should be sparingly and cautiously administered.

Without having recourse either to punishment or rewards, Pestalozzi has found it possible to introduce into his school a more perfect discipline, greater order and regularity, than has been produced on any other system. It were rash to conclude, that it is to the mild and amiable character of the Swiss peasantry that he has solely been indebted for success. No. His success may with greater propriety be ascribed to his having taken extraordinary pains to bring the minds of his pupils into a state of activity, while he, at the same time, by awak-

ening the affections, sedulously applied to the cultivation of the heart.

To all who believe in God, and in divine revelation, the religious instruction of children must appear in the light of a duty indispensable. Even those who look not beyond the present life perceive the utility of religion, as imposing a salutary restraint on the selfish passions in the lower orders of society. But if we acknowledge the gospel, we must also acknowledge, that from the discovery therein made of the relation in which we stand to the Author and Finisher of our redemption, there springs a class of duties no less incumbent on us, than are the duties which spring from our relation to our fellow-creatures, whether as superiors, inferiors, or equals; and that therefore we are no less bound to instruct children in the faith which the gospel enjoins, than to instruct them in the nature of their other moral obliga-

tions. This will not, as I apprehend, be denied by any thinking Christian. It is then only concerning the method to be observed in conveying this essential instruction, that a difference of opinion can be supposed to exist. Some imagine, that it may be effectually conveyed by imposing on the memory a form of words and terms, so far beyond the comprehension of the infant mind, as not to be rendered intelligible by any explanation; while others think, that the truths of religion ought to be gradually unfolded as the mind and heart are prepared for their reception; and that, as instruction, to be effectual, must be apportioned to the state of the faculties, it is necessary to lay a foundation for religious principle, by endeavouring to expand the intellect, and to excite and exercise the moral feelings. The arguments of the latter appear to me incontrovertible. We do not expect miracles to be

wrought in our favour ; and without a miracle it is impossible, that, when all the intermediate ideas are wanting, any abstract proposition can be clearly or thoroughly understood.

Highly as any sect may think of its own peculiar dogmas, none will aver, that in the knowledge of these dogmas the sum and substance of all the Christian duties are comprised. Religion demands not only the assent of the understanding, it requires of us the perpetual exercise of all the pure and amiable affections of the heart, and presents to those affections appropriate objects in the display of the divine perfections. No system of religious instruction can then be complete which does not apply to the heart as much as to the understanding ; nor can any be said to apply to the understanding, which involves ideas remote from all with which the mind has been familiar.

If we are in any doubt, let us look to the example of HIM " who taught as never man taught." Let us recollect, that in teaching the gospel to the poor and ignorant, he never failed to descend to the capacity of his humble audience, and that, while he adapted his instructions to the intellect of those whose mental faculties were capable of only partial exertion, he made every instruction a means of awakening and exciting the best affections of the heart. Between the authority of custom, and the authority of divine example, we cannot (should these be at variance) be at a loss, to chuse. Instead of wasting our efforts, in vain attempts to make children comprehend what is beyond their faculties, we shall then be at pains to model our instruction to the present state of the infant mind, that we may gradually strengthen and expand its powers; and while we thus prepare it for receiving

the seeds of knowledge, endeavour, by every means in our power, to awaken the sensibilities of the heart; that when the understanding is ripened, the doctrines which will then be unfolded to its view, may excite the affections which they are calculated to exercise and improve.

Concerning the beneficial tendency of this attention to the foundation on which the superstructure of moral and religious principle is to be reared, there will, I trust, be little difference of opinion; as, far from presenting any obstacle to the reception of the important doctrines which are in due time to be communicated, it will only render the reception of them more certainly efficacious. It is in the integrity of moral principle, and in the due regulation of the affections and desires of the heart, that the efficacy of religious principle is most fully displayed. And as it seems

not to admit of dispute, that he whose infant heart has been habitually excited by gratitude to God, will be better prepared for making a moral improvement of every religious doctrine, than he whose affections have never been called forth by attention to the proofs of divine goodness; it follows, that we cannot more effectually promote the moral efficacy of the doctrines we wish to inculcate, than by directing the infant mind to objects propitious to the exercise of the feelings of gratitude and love. We must however remember, that it is not from the transient, but from the habitual exercise of the benevolent affections, that any good can spring. In order, therefore, to render school education substantially and permanently beneficial, every school ought to be so modelled and conducted as to become instrumental in the cultivation of those tempers and dispositions

which accord with a pure and holy faith.* To this object every part of the discipline and administration should be made

* To those who take no farther interest in the education of the lower orders than as it affords additional security to property, it is of importance to shew, that the same arguments by which they have been induced to become friendly to an extension of the knowledge of letters, will be found to apply with yet greater force in favour of the mode of instruction above recommended.

If, in a country where all in the lower classes were equally illiterate, it appeared, that out of a population consisting of two millions, two thousand were annually convicted of crimes against the lives and properties of their fellow-subjects, every thousandth person would, according to the principles on which chances are calculated, be born to the gallows. But as all probabilities are more or less affected by circumstances, it would become necessary to inquire, by what circumstances these chances were increased or diminished; and if it were upon strict investigation to appear, that of the persons convicted of felony, six out of seven could neither read nor write, it would immediately

subservient. And if, in any of the methods usually resorted to for promoting diligence and application, aught is, from experience, found to have a tendency to inflame and bring into activity the passions, which, as subversive of piety and

be concluded, that, by teaching the poor to read and write, the number of felons would be thereby diminished, and property be in an equal proportion rendered more secure. On this view of the subject, many on whom higher motives would have little influence have become friendly to the education of the poor. But when it is considered, that though the greater number of thieves and robbers are confessedly illiterate, education, by enabling men to commit frauds and forgeries, increases the chances against the security of property in one way, as much as it diminishes it in another, there is some reason to fear, that those recent converts to the benefits of education may relapse into scepticism. But let them carry their inquiries a little farther. Let them endeavour to ascertain how many out of every hundred of the unhappy criminals who are doomed to suffer for their offences, have been instructed in the

benevolence, are inimical to the spirit of religion, it will be obvious, that every such practice, however endeared by custom, ought without hesitation to be dismissed. Nor will it be enough to forego what is injurious; we must endea-

doctrines and duties of Christianity, and then, making the proportionate deduction, fairly strike the balance. Again,—Of those who have been instructed in the doctrines of religion, let them determine in how many instances that instruction has been calculated to influence the heart; how many had in infancy been impressed with a sense of the goodness, wisdom, power, and holiness of the Supreme Being, and taught to consider themselves as living continually in the presence of God, and as accountable to him for all their actions. If they find, that of those who have yielded to the force of temptation, not one in a thousand have spent the first years of life under the habitual influence of such impressions, they must, upon their own principles, acknowledge, that if it be possible, by any method of instruction, to produce such impressions, the security and happiness of society would be thereby augmented a thousand fold.

vour to discover, and to apply such incentives to exertion, as may at once stimulate the mind, and tend to exercise and improve the moral feelings and affections. And here much assistance may be derived from the hints afforded by the conduct of Pestalozzi.

Whatever is eminently useful or beneficial in his system, may indeed be traced to a higher source. By attending to the most perfect model, he observed the propriety of applying directly to the mind and heart, in laying the foundation of religious faith and religious practice. In other respects a servile imitation of Pestalozzi's method of tuition may neither be always practicable nor perhaps advisable. But in every imaginable situation, and under every variety of circumstance, the same principles may be adopted with the same success.

On whatever plan a school may have been organized, whatever the station of

solars, or the nature of their studies, or the method of teaching, there cannot in any instance be an objection to introduce, as an auxiliary, that which proposes to excite in the minds of children the affections and dispositions of which religion commands the perpetual exercise.

Let us now take a nearer view of the means which Pestalozzi resorted to for effecting this important purpose. He, in the first place, by questions adapted to the tender age of the pupil, endeavoured to ascertain whether any idea existed in his mind upon the subject to which he wished to direct his attention; and from any one clear idea of which he found the child in possession, he led him on, by a series of questions, to the acquirement of such other ideas as were most intimately connected with that primary conception. Thus, for example, suppose that he found in the child an idea of the

existence of a being whom he called God. He, instead of teaching him to repeat by rote the notions communicated by divine revelation on what constitutes the basis of all religious principle, proceeded, by questioning him, to direct his attention to such of the evidences of the divine power, wisdom, and goodness, as were immediately within reach of his perceptions. Concerning the unbounded love and all-directing providence of the Supreme Being, clear ideas were in like manner obtained; and thus the infant mind was led, at an early period, to objects which cannot at any period of life be contemplated without producing correspondent emotions of reverence, gratitude, love, and veneration.

Having thus prepared the heart for obeying "the first and great commandment," he, by leading to a consideration of the omnipresence of Deity, rendered the impression deep and permanent. It

was thus that Pestalozzi laid a foundation for the belief and practice of the doctrines and duties of Christianity, when the faculties of the understanding should be sufficiently ripened for comprehending the importance of the truths that have in mercy been revealed. It was on the same principle, and by the same method of instruction, that Pestalozzi inspired his pupils with correct notions of justice, probity, and benevolence. The duty of doing to others as they would have others in like case do to them, appeared as it were a discovery of their own. A truth demonstrated and unquestionable. Led also in the same manner to a perception of the utility of order, they became conscious of the necessity of adhering strictly to the rules and forms of discipline, essential to the preservation of that order, of which they felt the benefit and advantage. Instructed, and in a manner com-

elled to think, and to examine the motives of their conduct, they learned to set a value on self-approbation, confirmed by the approbation of those in whose wisdom they placed confidence.

We may easily believe, that where the moral feelings have been rendered thus susceptible, the dread of losing the esteem of a reverenced instructor would impose a restraint more powerful than is imposed by the terror of punishment. But whether it be really possible to produce such a delicate sense of rectitude, such moral sensibility, in a mixed multitude of little beings, whose previous habits have probably been of a nature directly adverse to moral discipline, will to some, perhaps, seem more than doubtful. Let us not, however, prejudge the question.

Concerning the possibility or impossibility, none have a right to aver with certainty, until the experiment has been

actually and fairly made. No better opportunity for making it can be desired, than that which is presented to the managers of a school for girls, conducted under the immediate auspices and superintendence of ladies, whose zeal to promote the interests of the institution is kindled at the pure fountain of piety and benevolence, and who, superior to the vulgar passions of vanity and ambition, seek, in doing good, for no other gratification than the happiness of contributing to the welfare of their fellow-creatures. Having no petty interests to serve, no pre-conceived prejudices to overcome, their judgment will be unfettered in its operation; and knowing that the improvement of the mind and heart can only be effected by a gradual process, they will not be discouraged by a slowness of progress, but, provided they perceive that improvement be indeed progressive, will persevere until it is

complete. Should they see fit to call to their assistance those who are as yet unincumbered with cares, and unemployed by the duties which devolve on persons more advanced in years, they will find, even in the circles of rank and fashion, those who, amid the allurements of gaiety, have in the bloom of youth acquired a relish for the more exalted pleasures of benevolence, and who, from the time devoted to the acquirement of accomplishments, will willingly extract a portion for a work of charity.

It must however be confessed, that it is not so much from an idea of its being necessary to seek the aid of such auxiliaries, as from a conviction of the advantages that would result to the young from such a salutary employment of their time and thoughts, that the suggestion has originated.

If the hints which I have taken the liberty to suggest be found worthy of

attention, the adoption, (in any one school,) of the principles recommended, will put their utility to proof; and, if the result is favourable, may lead to their being generally adopted in every seminary of education; especially in such as are established for the benefit of those whose minds have no chance of receiving improvement under the domestic roof. There is particularly one description of charitable institutions to which Pestalozzi's plan of instruction, as far as it offers means of exercising the faculties and affections, appears peculiarly applicable. I allude to the numerous establishments which have been endowed for the laudable purpose of supplying to the orphan and the destitute the blessings of maintenance and education.

In those seminaries of youth and innocence benevolence has made ample provision, not only for the physical wants of the objects of her solicitude, but for

their instruction in useful arts, and in moral and religious principles. When we behold an assemblage of innocents thus enjoying the advantages of being entirely secluded from a world in which they would have been exposed to the contagion of vice, our hearts rejoice in the anticipation of the consequences. But, alas, on inquiring into the conduct of the female élèves, how miserably are we disappointed! Though their education has been more liberal, more extensive, and carried on more regularly, and for a greater length of time than the education of girls in the same rank of life in other situations, they are found not only to be less qualified for the employments to which they are destined, but less capable of acquiring the necessary qualifications than others of their sex. To the indolence which is the never-failing concomitant of sluggish perception, they are generally so prone, that I

have never yet heard of an instance of the contrary. But this is not all. Of the unhappy females who become victims to vice it is confidently reported, that a vast proportion have been brought up in charitable institutions, endowed and supported for the very purpose of preserving them in virtue.

Concerning some of the many causes which have contributed to render abortive all the pains bestowed in their instruction, such convincing arguments have been offered by Mrs Cappe of York, in her excellent Treatise on Charitable Institutions, as cannot fail to meet with merited attention from all who are in anywise concerned in the management of such establishments. But their successful management is not merely the concern of individuals,—it concerns the interests of society; and to society the governors are in some degree responsible for the principles and conduct of the be-

ings over whose minds, during the most important period of life, they have unlimited controul. Seldom, however, can they be accused of negligence, or even of a careless discharge of the duties of their important, but very troublesome officé. In their anxiety to promote the future well-being of the girls who have in childhood innocence been received into the asylums over which they preside, the directors are frequently seen to take much pains in the appointment of teachers, and conscientiously bestow a certain portion of their time on the stated days of examination. Obliged to commit the care of all minute particulars in the management of the establishment to some matron of approved experience, their farther interference would not only be unnecessary, but unwise. Nor have they, in all probability, any reason to complain of negligence on the part of the matron, or of the schoolmistress, of whose con-

seem to have a peculiar claim to sympathy and protection. They are in fact the children of the public, and it is the duty of the public to pay attention to the circumstances which tend either to render them less useful in society, or more liable to yield to the temptations of vice.

In her "Thoughts on Charitable Institutions,"* Mrs Cappe well observes, "that the great advantage over day-schools, of keeping the children more ignorant of the vices which too commonly affect the lower orders of society, is not wholly without its disadvantages. If, indeed, the poor girls so carefully educated could generally be placed in religious worthy families, the result might be very different; and yet, even if this were possible, as ignorance of vice is not the dread and

abhorrence essential to the preservation of virtue ; and as these poor girls must sooner or later mix in a world full of temptation, even that very simplicity of character, in itself so amiable, renders them an easier prey to the arts of the seducer, and has really a tendency to accelerate their fall."

In respect to ignorance of the miseries which attach to vice, the children of the peasantry in remote districts are on a par with girls brought up in the seclusion of an Orphan Hospital ; but on entering the busy scenes of life, the former, if tolerably well educated, and accustomed to the exertion of industry, will be found to possess over the latter considerable advantages. Both have lived in retirement ; but how different in kind and in variety have been the objects on which their attention has been exercised ! Both have experienced the blessings of protection ; but on quitting the roofs under

which they have respectively been educated, while the simple cottager carries with her the endearing recollections of parental tenderness, and the assurance of being still an object of interest to those she loves, the élève of charity bears with her no recollections that excite the glow of affection, no hope of dwelling in the memory of those she leaves behind, but a conviction that the gates of the mansion in which she has been immured, are now shut against her for ever. Feeling as if alone in the world, she arms herself with obstinate indifference to a destiny, in which, whether good or evil, she believes that none will sympathize. These, it must be confessed, are heavy disadvantages; but they are, as I apprehend, by no means irremediable.

Though girls in every branch of life are, with regard to the opportunities for acquiring ideas from external objects,

less favourably situated than boys; yet as, even to the former, a great variety of objects are generally, in the common course of things, presented to the examination of the senses, the impulse given by natural curiosity seldom fails to awaken the power of observation; and it is of consequence but very rarely that we, in ordinary life, meet with any who seem destitute of ideas relating to the common objects of perception. We are therefore apt to conclude, that the faculties exercised in the acquirement of those ideas improve spontaneously, and that it is not in human power, either to retard or facilitate their progress. Full of this erroneous notion, when we place children in situations where they are always surrounded with the same objects, where there is no change of circumstance, no variety of aspect, nothing in short to excite curiosity, or awaken attention; it is with no small surprise that we find

them to increase in growth without increasing in capacity or intelligence. But ought not this to convince us that the deficiency, if common to all in such circumstances, must originate in somewhat peculiar to the situation? The faculties of the girls of whose stupidity we complain have never been exercised, save by the dull round of daily tasks; attention to other objects has never been excited, nor required, and consequently the power of attention has been impaired. If then we perceive that their minds are unusually torpid, do we not also perceive ample cause for that torpidity? As a salvo to our conscience we may perhaps be satisfied with proofs of their being able to perform the arts in which they have been instructed by their teachers: But though they may, by reiterated imitation, have learned to read and write, and sew and spin after the example of others;—if incapable of the discernment essential

towards the acquirement of ideas, on what grounds do we expect that they will be capable of doing aught beyond what they have been taught, or even of doing the same things under the slightest alteration of circumstances? Incapable of receiving clear ideas from the view or description of objects, they can only work from a pattern, and are at best but copying machines, which are at a stand the moment the hand which directs their movement is withdrawn. It has before been observed, that indolence is the never-failing concomitant of slow perception; and that, in order to excuse the neglect of duty which indolence has occasioned, recourse is frequently had to falsehood. It is unnecessary to add, that by habitual falsehood, the mind must soon be so far contaminated as to be rendered liable to the contagion of vice in other forms. And let it be remembered, that though the mental fa-

vulties are never thoroughly developed without attention to their appropriate objects, and, when not developed in infancy, are apt to become torpid and incapable of acting; the passions require no such helpful care to bring them forth, but "grow with the growth, and strengthen with the strength." Where neither the understanding nor the affections are cultivated, the passions would reign without controul, were it not that they keep each other in some measure in check. In the lower orders of society, fear of punishment, or the dread of incurring the evils arising from loss of reputation, lay a wholesome restraint on their impetuosity. But when the evil seems at a distance, and when there appears withal to be a chance of escaping it by an artful concealment of the crime, its terrors will seldom be sufficiently strong to cope with the greater strength of present temptation.

And how can these poor girls appreciate the evils consequent on loss of reputation? If their instruction in religion has consisted of a repetition of forms, of words beyond their comprehension, neither calculated to convey distinct ideas to their minds, nor to excite any pious emotions in their hearts, can it be supposed, that the fear of incurring the divine displeasure will be likely to dwell on their imagination? To whom on earth are they accountable for their conduct? Isolated, unconnected, and unknown, save to the few with whom they have by chance associated, the seducer is perhaps the only person on earth from whom they expect even to hear words of kindness. Unqualified to render themselves serviceable or highly useful in society, yet anxious to obtain notice, if ever they calculate so far as to place the gratification offered to vanity and indolence, against the evils at-

tending loss of character, it is easy to foresee on which side the balance will preponderate.

True it is, that after they have run the short career of vice and misery they may find shelter in the asylums which charity has opened to the penitent. I should be sorry to be so far misunderstood as to be supposed inimical to such works of mercy. That they have in many instances been the means of saving souls from destruction, does not admit of doubt; but when rendered conspicuous objects of public attention; when their claims for support from public generosity are not only put in competition with the claims of virtuous indigence, but held forth as preferable; and when, from the sums thus collected, the *soi-disant* penitents are enabled to live in greater ease and luxury than is enjoyed by those of lowly station who depend on their own industry for subsistence, there is some

reason to apprehend, that pernicious effects may be produced from the example. If, where principle is feeble; virtue frequently derives its chief support from the dread of incurring poverty and contempt, whatever tends to lessen that dread must also tend to lessen the reluctance to vice, by removing a primary obstacle. In this point of view, the provision made for the recovery of the lost may, if ostentatiously displayed, become a snare to the innocent. But does it therefore follow, that we ought to shut our hearts against the penitent, and doom all who fail to perish in promiscuous and irremediable misery! No. It only follows, that we ought to open our hearts and understandings to a consideration of the means, by which we may increase the power of virtuous principle in the minds of those of the sex who, of all others, are most liable to be exposed to the snares of seduction. Offences

must come, but woe to him through whom the offence cometh."

The first thing to be done, is to remove that obstruction to the operations of the mental faculties, which arises from opposing the laws of nature. To the élèves of charity, precluded as they are by the situation in which they are placed from common opportunities of observation, and thus deprived of the natural means of exercising their faculties, it is the duty of those on whom they are dependent to make some compensation for the heavy loss they thus sustain. By a few simple contrivances, judiciously planned, and carefully practised, they may be made habitually to exert their minds in the acquirement of clear and accurate notions, concerning all the objects of perception which can be brought within reach of their observation; and thus their mental powers, instead of being suffered to remain dormant, will be gradually developed and

improved, and rendered capable of being exerted on other objects.

By farther care, the affections of the heart may be effectually roused from that state of torpor into which, where there are none of the mutual endearments of domestic life, they are so apt to fall. In this respect, where the government of such establishments devolves on mercenaries of mean endowments, a great deficiency will, I believe, be very generally observable. In care of the health, and in occasional indulgences of the palate, such persons comprise all their notions of tenderness. Nor does the possibility of awakening any of the finer emotions of the heart ever occur to them; nor, if it did occur, would the propriety of making the attempt be evident to their understandings. There is little chance, that in the routine of religious instruction, when conducted by persons of confined intellect, any very

salutary impression should be made upon the heart; for seldom, in such cases, are the objects of religious faith placed before the mind in a manner calculated to excite an emotion of love, gratitude, or veneration. And as to those tempers and dispositions inculcated by the apostle in that divine exhortation, " Little children, love one another," it is not, alas! by the restraints of rigid discipline that they can be effectually improved.

The feelings which lead to mutual love, and mutual forbearance, must be cultivated by other means; and never, not even under the domestic roof, is more ample opportunity presented for cultivating them than such institutions as we now speak of obviously afford. The mother's milk is not more necessary for the sustenance of her infant offspring, than is maternal tenderness for preserving the vital flow of affection. When, therefore, children are deprived of a mo-

ther's care, it is incumbent on us to make for them, equally in both instances, such a provision as may compensate for the deprivation. But however kindly disposed may be the feelings of the matron who presides over the establishment, it is impossible that each of the little beings placed beneath her care can be made to feel herself the peculiar object of her tenderness. Fixed in her orbit, she, like a distant planet, dispenses on all an equal portion of light; but none are warmed by its beams. But may not the children be made to stand to each other in those endearing relations from which all the charities of life are ordained to emanate? May not all the elder girls be to each other as sisters, and each of these, again, stand in the relation of mother to a certain number of those of more tender age? It will not surely be averred, that the most careful instruction in any art or science could, by any possibility, be-

come to them more beneficial than instruction in the art of managing the tempers, sweetening the dispositions, and awaking the intellects of their infant charge. By one law, indeed, all must be governed to produce any permanently good effect,—*the law of kindness.* Neither in word nor in deed must this law be ever broken. By it not only every act of severity, but every act of injudicious indulgence, must be tried. Thus would the mind be gradually habituated to look forward to the future consequences of the present conduct, and both mind and heart, gratified by the success which had attended the vigilant discharge of duty, would, on entering the world, be prepared to apply with diligence to the discharge of new and more extensive duties.

I forbear to speak of the advantages that would result to society, from converting the institutions alluded to into

seminaries for training girls for becoming expert and judicious in the management and early education of infants of a superior class. In the treatise to which I have had occasion to allude, all that I could urge on that subject has been anticipated by one whose remarks bear the authority of wisdom and experience. But whatever situations the objects of such institutions are destined to fill, the benefit that will result to them, from the previous habitual exercise of their faculties and affections, appears unquestionable.

The only thing, then, that remains to be offered to consideration, is the medium through which this object is to be effected. Can it be supposed, that the gentlemen (whether lay or ecclesiastic), who are governors of such establishments, will devote their time and attention to forming the mind and habits of little girls? Is it to be presumed, that the matron on

whom the task devolves, is always competent to the task? If she is not, how is her incompetency to be discovered? To whom is the state of intellect, the temper, the dispositions; and the conduct of those secluded beings known? But why are they thus sequestered from needful observation? Instead of being left solely dependent on the wisdom of a governess or matron, why are they not placed under the inspection and direction of a select number of persons of their own sex, filling respectable situations in society?

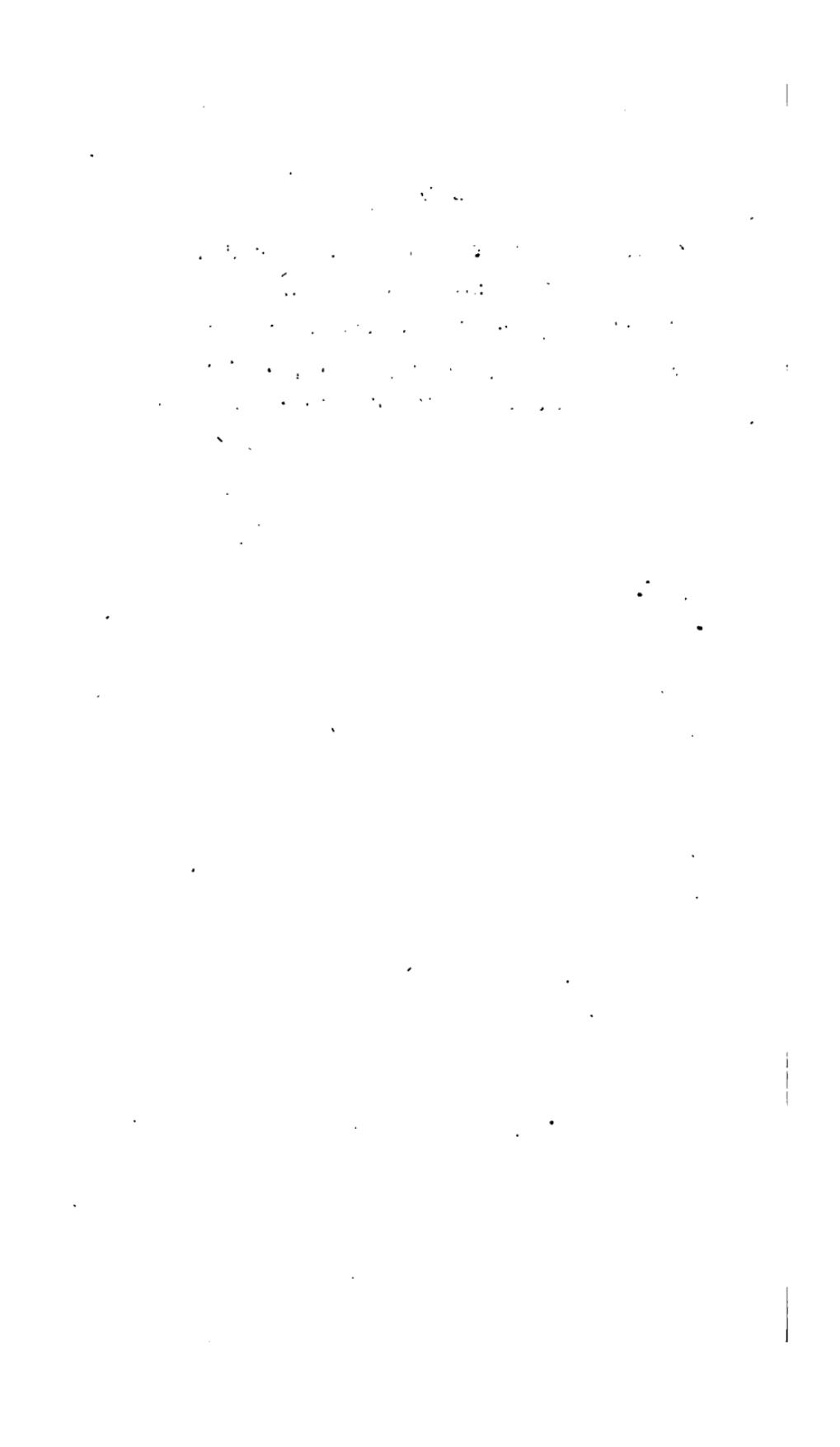
It would, I grant, be sufficient in reply to shew, that the few institutions of ancient or modern foundation, which have of late years been entrusted solely to the care and management of ladies, have materially suffered by the innovation; and that the girls sent from them into the world, are even worse qualified than they used formerly to be. The very reverse;

however, is a fact which I believe to be incontrovertibly established. Whence then the jealousy of interference? Alas! from *patronage*,—the root of many evils. Wherever party is permitted to exert its pertinacious influence, even the paltry place of teacher or matron of an hospital becomes an object whereon to exercise its baleful spirit; and whoever owes advancement to patronage, and not to merit, must at all events be tenaciously supported; nor can such an one be found fault with, or even supposed to be fallible, without wounding the pride of the patron in the tenderest point.

These are however extreme cases; and I am convinced that a reluctance to depart from ancient practices may, in general, be more justly ascribed to respect for whatever has long been sanctioned by the authority of custom. But it should be recollected, that though the mode of preparing any description of beings for performing

the duties to which they are destined, may remain unaltered, the habits and manners of society must meanwhile be undergoing material alteration. Can it then be imagined, that the same education which was a hundred years ago deemed eligible and sufficient, will at the present day suffice to shield them from temptation, or to enable them to discharge with propriety the duties attached to various situations, to which the changes that have taken place in the manners of society have given birth? In order to meet this change, it were in vain to endeavour to accomplish the pupils in every art that happens to come in vogue; for soon, by the fluctuations of fashion, might that knowledge be rendered useless. But never can our endeavours to improve the moral and intellectual faculties of rational agents be thus abortive. Never can the pains that are taken to awaken the pious and benevolent affections be-

come altogether nugatory, provided those affections are allowed such opportunities of perpetual exercise as to render them, during the important period of youth, habitual inmates of the breast.



**EXAMPLES
OF
QUESTIONS
CALCULATED TO
DEVELOP THE FACULTIES
OF THE
INFANT MIND..**



INTRODUCTION.

THE method of instructing by interrogation is not an invention of modern date; it is, on the contrary, known to have been practised by some of the wisest and most revered of the ancient philosophers; nor has it, indeed, at any period fallen totally into disuse; but, though retained in form, it has been so perverted from its original purpose, that instead of being regarded as a mode of exciting the mind to an exertion of its powers, it is only resorted to as an expedient for assisting the memory, when it is our wish to impress it with axioms which the intellect is not prepared to receive, or comprehend. The pupil, in this case, does

not refer the question to his understanding, but finds it connected with the answer in his mind by an arbitrary association; and should he at an after period be led to reconsider the important truths which he thus learns to repeat by rote, as it is in the answers that he will find them to be contained, he will set aside the questions as superfluous.

But though the questions, in such instances, contribute little to instruction, when propositions are to be committed to memory, of a nature far remote from every idea with which the mind of the pupil is familiar, their use as a *memoria technica* is sufficiently obvious. Wherever, therefore, it is deemed necessary to impress upon the memory words and terms of mighty import, while the mind is yet incapable of attaching to them any corresponding idea, the form of question and answer will justly obtain a preference. Concerning the benefits

to be derived from the exercise, opinions may differ, but it must be admitted by all, that when a child is to be made to repeat answers to propositions beyond his comprehension, the words must necessarily be put into his mouth, for by his own mind they could not possibly be suggested.

What is thus learned may, at a future period, be recollect ed with advantage; but if the instruction contained in those propositions be of the utmost importance to his soul; if it be of a nature that nearly concerns his eternal welfare; can it be deemed safe or prudent to cast our sole dependance on the strength of his memory, which may, perchance, as the understanding opens, recal the truths we have impressed upon it to his consideration? Would it not be a safer and a better course, to endeavour to prepare his mind for comprehending the doctrines we so justly value, by enabling

him, through the exercise of his faculties, to acquire the intermediate ideas?

For the accomplishment of this high object the mode of instructing by interrogation appears well adapted. But when it is to be thus applied, we must carefully abstain from helping the pupil to the proper answer, as otherwise we shall be defeating our purpose; nor will such assistance be necessary, for questions that are calculated to excite to the acquirement of new ideas must be so adapted to the present state of the mind as to be easily understood; in which case the reply will be given spontaneously.

As questions are on this system resorted to, not as expedients to assist the memory, but as means of suggesting new ideas to the mind, and thereby preparing it for comprehending the important truths of religion, every question found beyond the comprehension of the pupil must be put aside as useless;

until, by suggesting ideas more nearly connected with those he is possessed of, the mind has been gradually expanded to the degree necessary for comprehending them.

In the following pages an attempt has been made to form a series of questions on this model. The examples given are, however, by no means presented as being adequate or complete, but merely as affording hints to the instructor concerning the mode of bringing the powers of the infant mind into action, and of exercising those powers. In each description of questions, as they severally apply to the understanding or the heart, much must necessarily be left to the discretion of the instructor, who may omit or enlarge at pleasure; taking care, in every instance, to modify the question so as it may be thoroughly understood. With this precaution, teachers in private families, by selecting such parts of the work as ap-

pear to them best adapted to the minds of their pupils, may avail themselves of whatever assistance it is calculated to afford in developing the faculties. It may thus, though composed chiefly with a view to the instruction of children in the lower stations, become in some degree useful in every station.

As, happily, in this part of the kingdom, a notion of the existence of a Supreme Being is in every situation in life one of the first ideas communicated to the infant mind, I have proceeded on the supposition, that some notion of Deity has been received. And as the questions intended to lead to a consideration of the attributes of the divine nature have been found perfectly intelligible to little girls of seven and eight years of age, recently admitted into a charity-school, it is to be hoped they will not be found beyond the capacity of any children of the same

age. To some they may perhaps appear objectionable, as being too simple and obvious. But if we wish to apply to the minds of children, we must not disdain to stoop to them. It is by taking hold of what they know, that we can alone lead them to greater knowledge, and only by awakening the affections that we can hope to raise the heart to God.



EXAMPLES, &c.

PART I.

*Examples of Questions intended to exercise
the Perceptions by attention to external
objects.*

SECTION I.

Questioner. Do you know the meaning of the words upright and across, and flat and crooked?

Answer.

Q. Let all hold the first finger of their right hands pointing upwards, and then do you tell me which is most truly and exactly upright.

A.

Q. Now let all hold the same finger straight across, or horizontal, as it is properly termed. Very well; next shew me what crooked means, by holding your finger crooked.

A.

Q. Do you know what is meant by slanting, or oblique? If you do, explain, by holding your finger in an oblique direction.

A.

Q. Let us now examine the tables and desks in the room: Is any part of that before us what you call flat?

A.

Q. Are any parts of the table upright?

A.

Q. Are any of its parts horizontal or straight across?

A.

Q. Is the surface of that desk flat like the table, or is it slant

A.

Q. Can you now describe to me the form of the table?

A.

Q. Are all tables made exactly of the same form? Describe then the form of any other table that you have seen.

A.

Q. Do you know the difference betwixt square and round? Here are two bits of paper, one square and one round; tell me which is square and which round?

A.

Q. Are all sides of a square of equal length? Fold that piece of paper from corner to corner, and you will discover whether they are exactly equal.

A.

Q. Can you now describe the nature of a square?

A.

Q. F—this round or circular pa-
r; d it, now open it, and

observe whether all the folds do not meet in the middle, or what is more properly called the centre. Next, look and tell me whether the outward edge be more distant from the middle in one part than in another?

A.

Q. A circle is always perfectly round, and the middle point of the circle is called the centre: Now give me an accurate description of a circle.

A.

Q. Can you describe to me the form of a cart-wheel? Is it square or circular?

A.

Q. Where do the spokes of the wheel meet?

A.

Q. Are all the spokes of a wheel of equal length?

A.

Q. Why are wheels made of a circular form, instead of being made square?

A.

Q. How many corners has a square?

A.

Q. Is every thing which has four corners exactly square?

A.

Q. Observe the shape of the door:
Has it not four corners?

A.

Q. And is it exactly square? Is it equal
in length and breadth?

A.

Q. When a thing is made longer than
it is broad, it is called oblong: Now tell
me the form of the door.

A.

Q. Repeat to me the meaning of the
word *circular*.

A.

Q. Is a circle long or broad, or is it
quite round?

A.

Q. Whereabouts is the centre of a circle?

A.
Q. Where is the centre of a square?

A.
Q. Are all the windows of this room of the same size and form?

A.
Q. In what form are they made?

A.
Q. Of what shape is this room?
A.
Q. Of what shape is the poker that stirs the fire?

A.
Q. Of what shape are the tongs and the shovel?
A.

SECTION II.

Questioner. Let us now examine the forms of the capital letters of the alphabet. What letter is formed by two oblique lines meeting at top, and slanting opposite ways, and joined about half way down by a short line across? (A.)

A.

Q. Describe to me how this next letter is formed.*

A.

* The same mode of interrogation may be pursued with regard to the other letters of the alphabet, as a means of producing habits of observation and accuracy. Nor should any means which can contribute to the formation of such habits be rejected on account of their simplicity. It is by attending to the objects with which they are surrounded, that children gradually acquire the use of their external senses; and in proportion as we can increase that attention, we in-

SECTION III.

On different Substances.

Questioner. Saw the air in this manner, back and forwards, with your hand: Does the air make any resistance?

A.

Q. Strike the table with your hand: Does it yield to you as the air did?

A.

Q. The table is a substance, and is therefore seen and felt. In this respect all substances are alike. What then is the nature of a substance?

increase in them, the quickness of disengagement. The exercises, of which examples have been given in the two preceding sections, may be extended at pleasure, until accurate notions concerning the forms and appearances of all objects within reach of observation has been obtained.

A.

Q. But are all substances of the same sort or class?

A.

Q. You are to be seen and felt, your body is therefore a substance, so is a cabbage, for it also is a thing that we can both see and feel; but there is surely some difference between you and a cabbage-stock.

A.

Q. True, a cabbage grows in the ground, and you are a living creature: What grows in the earth is called vegetable, what lives is called animal, because it is animated. Now tell me whether you are an animal or a vegetable?

A.

Q. Is the hair of your head a substance?

A.

Q. Is hair an animal or vegetable substance?

A.

Q. Of what is that table made?

A.

Q. But what is wood? Did it ever grow in the earth?

A.

Q. Of what substance then is the table? Is it animal or vegetable?

A.

Q. Of what are those shoes made?

A.

Q. Of what is leather made?

A.

Q. Of what substance then is leather?

A.

Q. Are there any other sorts of substances besides animal or vegetable?

A.

Q. Look at the grate and fire-irons: are they either animal or vegetable?

A.

Q. They are made of iron, which is a metal, and all metals are mineral substan-

ces. Is this penny-piece made of copper?

A.

Q. Is copper a metal?

A.

Q. Of what substance then is the penny-piece?

A.

Q. Here is a pin. Of what substance is the pin? Is it mineral or vegetable?

A.

Q. Your memory may perhaps be assisted by a rhyme; learn to repeat,—

In earth the vegetables grew,
Fast rooted in the soil,
And minerals lie deep below,
Dug thence with care and toil.

But animals have power of motion,
For life to them is given;
On earth, or in the air or ocean,
Each kind's preserved by heaven.

SECTION IV.

Same Subject continued.

Questioner. Can you point out to me any thing of mineral substance?

A.

Q. Can you show me a vegetable production; for you know that whatever has been once a vegetable is of vegetable substance?

A.

Q. Can you show me any thing of animal substance?

A.

Q. But there is another class of which we have not yet spoken; I mean earthy substances, or substances belonging to the earth, being neither mineral nor vegetable. Did you ever see clay dug from the earth? Of what substance is the clay?

A.

Q. Does stone belong to the earth?

A.

Q. Of what substance is stone?

A.

Q. Yes, it is a hard earthy substance.

Now examine that framed writing-slate:

Are the slate and frame of the same substance?

A.

Q. Of what substance is the slate?

A.

Q. Of what substance is the frame?

A.

Q. Of what substance is the pencil?

A.

Q. Is this pen of the same substance as the pencil?

A.

Q. Of what substance is the pen?

A.

Q. I shall now name things with which you are familiar, and expect who-

ever I point to, or look at, to answer me, by saying of what substance the thing is of. To begin, then, I say, the floor?

A.

Q. The nails by which the boards are fastened?

A.

Q. The hearth?

A.

Q. A paper book?

A.

Q. The binding of a bound book?

A.

Q. A golden guinea?

A.

Q. The gold leaf with which bound books and other things are gilded?

A.

Q. A hair-brush?

A.

Q. A birch or broom besom?

A.

Q. A spinning-wheel?

A.

Q. Woollen yarn?

A.

Q. Lint or flax?

A.

Q. Linen yarn?

A.

Q. Cotton?

A.

&c. &c. *

* Children will soon learn to proceed of themselves in this exercise. Nor let it be supposed, that in being thus converted into an agreeable recreation, its utility in promoting the ends of education will be diminished. Between children who have spent their play hours in listless indolence, and those who, during the intervals devoted to relaxation, have been actively engaged in amusements which afford exercise, either to body or mind, a radical difference will be

PART II.

*Examples of Questions calculated to lead
the mind to such a consideration of the
Divine Attributes as may tend to im-
press the heart.*

SECTION I.

Questioner. You are a living being ;
Who gave you life ?

Answer.

Q. Did not your parents live before
you were born ? Who gave life to them ?

A. They did not live before me, nor did they

give life to me, for I was created by God, who is

the author of all life, and the fountain of all creation.

It is a common observation, that the mind of man is easily led away from serious thoughts, and that it is difficult to bring him back again to them. This is particularly the case with young children, whose minds are like blank pages, ready to receive any impression. It is therefore very important, that every teacher should be careful to encourage such recreations as may tend to invigorate the faculties of his pupils.

Q. And who gave life to the parents of your parents?

A.

Q. Do you suppose, that in time to come God will give life to creatures yet unborn?

A.

Q. God has then existed in times that are past, and shall continue to exist in times that are to come?

A.

Q. Do you think that the earth, and the seas, and the skies, have been lately made; or that they were made a great many ages ago?

A.

Q. By whom were they made?

A.

Q. God must then have lived before all worlds. Are there many sorts of living creatures in the earth?

A.

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it loves us ; or is it the love and mercy of God that makes it continue to enlighten us day by day ?

A.

Q. Is it not in the power of God to extinguish (or put out) the light of the sun, and thence to leave us in perpetual darkness ?

A.

Q. Is it not in the power of the Maker of all things to destroy the earth and all the worlds that he has made ?

A.

Q. But do you not trust and expect that God will continue to permit the sun to shine in its season ?

A.

Q. Do you not hope and trust that the earth will continue to produce food to supply the wants of living creatures ?

A.

Q. Why do you thus expect the continuance of these mercies ? Is it because

you believe that God is as good as he is powerful?

A.

Q. Where is God? Is he in heaven?

A.

Q. Are we then far removed from his sight?

A.

Q. Does he behold us continually?

A.

Q. Can we with our bodily eyes see God?

A.

Q. You see me and hear my voice; but do you see the spirit within me? Do you see the thoughts which stir my heart?

A.

Q. My spirit is confined within this body; but do you think that the spirit of the great and incomprehensible Father of our spirits is confined in the manner that ours are?

A.

Q. Is then the Almighty, by whose power the heavens and the earth were made, *now, at this moment*, near us? Do we stand in his sight?

A.

Q. When shall we be out of his sight?

A.

Q. At whatever time we pray to God, we are certain then of his being present to hear us?

A.

Q. When any one gives you what is good, do you feel glad and thankful?

A.

Q. If you were in danger of being killed, would you not be very grateful to any one who rescued you from the danger?

A.

Q. Would you strive on such occasions to show your gratitude?

A.

Q. Who gave you life and every blessing that you enjoy?

A.

Q. Who has by night and by day preserved your life?

A.

Q. And ought you not then to feel very thankful to God?

A.

Q. But if you really feel thankful, will you not express your thanks?

A.

Q. When you awake to the light of a new day, ought you not to thank him who has preserved you through the dark hours of night?

A.

Q. When you go to your bed at night, ought you not to express your gratitude to him who has protected you through the day from numerous dangers?

A.

SECTION II.

Experience of Personal Mercies.

Questioner. Can you walk and run?

Answer.

Q. Could you walk as soon as you were born?

A.

Q. Who taught you to walk? or do you think that you would have learned to walk without being taught?

A.

Q. No. If you had been left in a wood as soon as you were able to creep upon the ground, you would not have learned to walk, but have run upon your hands and feet all your life. Some poor unfortunate children, who, when deserted by their parents, have been found in different parts of the world; and these, even at the age of fourteen and fifteen,

did not walk as we do, but on their hands and feet; for they, poor things, had no example before them but the beasts of the field? Can you put on your own clothes? Can you dress yourself?

A.

Q. Who taught you thus to use your hands?

A.

Q. Do you think if you had been left in a forest, like the poor deserted children I have mentioned, that you could have dressed yourself if clothes had been given you?

A.

Q. Who carried you until you were able to walk?

A.

Q. Who cherished you in her bosom, and fed you and took care of you when you could not take care of yourself?

A.

Q. Were you ever sick?

A.

Q. When you were sick; did your mother then watch over you, wishing all the time that you might recover?

A.

Q. But had she it in her power by her wishes to preserve your life?

A.

Q. By whose power then were you restored to health?

A.

Q. Was it by God's blessing on your mother's care that you were restored?

A.

Q. God then heard your mother when she prayed for you; she asked for your recovery, and God granted what she asked.

A.

Q. You are much indebted to your mother; is she not still anxious that you should be preserved from every danger?

A.

Q. Can she save you from danger when you are out of her sight?

A.

Q. But does she not think of you, and love you, when you are absent from her?

A.

Q. Her mind can then be with you, though her body is at home: But can she, by thinking of you, prevent your being exposed to any injury?

A.

Q. It is then only while she is present with you that the strength of her arm has power to help you?*

* It will be perceived, that where children have been early deprived of parental care, by death or desertion, the form of the questions must be altered to suit their peculiar circumstances; and framed in such terms as may lead to a consideration of the goodness of God, in raising up to them the benefactors who have supplied to them the place of parents.

A.

Q. Is God Almighty confined to one place as we his creatures are?

A.

Q. Is God equally present, and always present, in heaven and earth, and in all places?

A.

Q. Can we ever, for a single moment of our existence, be out of his sight?

A.

Q. Can we speak so low as that God cannot hear what we say?

A.

Q. Can we think without his knowing the thoughts of our hearts?

A.

Q. Is God, who is thus all-seeing and all-wise, visible in our eyes? Can we see him as we see one another?

A.

Q. You believe that your mother thinks of you and loves you; but do you

see the thoughts of her heart? Do you see that within her which thinks and loves?

A.

Q. You feel the effects of her kindness, and therefore believe that she loves you in her heart, do you not?

A.

Q. And do you not feel the effects of the kindness and goodness of God; who has given you eyes to see, and ears to hear, and a mind capable of receiving instruction?

A.

Q. Who gave your mother the heart to love you? Who inspires every mother with fondness for the child of her bosom?

A.

Q. Who has given you the friends who have taken care of you when too young to take care of yourself?

A.

Q. By whom has your life been preserved to this present moment?

A.

Q. Is God still able to protect you?

A.

Q. Is it only in day-light, and while you are in company of your friends, that God is able to preserve you?

A.

Q. If God can preserve you by night as well as by day, would it not be very foolish to fear to be alone?

A.

Q. Have you ever heard of silly children who were afraid of being in the dark?

A.

Q. But can those who know and are assured that God surrounds them, and that his presence is on every side, be ever thus afraid?

A.

Q. Do you think yourself safe when

under the immediate care and protection
of your mother?

A.

Q. But by whom has your mother
been so long protected and preserved?

A.

Q. Has she from the first moment of
her existence been in the presence of
God, and fed by his bounty, and cheris-
hed by his goodness, and preserved by his
mercy?

A.

Q. Has God, in giving life to you, be-
stowed a blessing on your parents?

A.

Q. Do we call that which makes us
happy, or that which makes us unhappy,
a blessing?

A.

Q. Do naughty and disobedient chil-
dren make their parents happy?

A.

Q. But do not good and obedient chil-

dren gladden the hearts of their parents, and make them very happy indeed?

A.

Q. Would you like to be looked upon as a blessing by your parents and friends?

A.

Q. By what sort of behaviour will you give them most reason to rejoice in you?

A.

Q. Think then often of all that they have done for you; and, when you think of it, be thankful?

A.

SECTION III.

Relating to the Provision made for our Sustenance.

Questioner. Are you glad to have bread to eat when you are hungry?

A.

Q. Where does the bread come from ?

A.

Q. But of what does your mother or
the baker make the bread ?

A.

Q. Who makes the flour or the meal ?

A.

Q. Of what does the miller make the
meal ?

A.

Q. Meal or flour may be made of
many different kinds of grain ; but of
whatever sort it is made, whether of
wheat, or oats, or barley, it is still made
of grain. Now, of what is the flour that
makes white bread or wheaten bread
made ?

A.

Q. Of what is oat-meal made ?

A.

Q. Of what is barley-meal made ?

A.

Q. Well, you see, they are all made of grain. But where does the wheat, and oats, and barley come from? Does corn fall in showers from the skies, like hail or snow?

A.

Q. True: it does grow in the fields. But does the corn grow without having been sown?

A.

Q. Well, it is, as you say, sown by the farmer; but, after it is sown, can the farmer make it grow? Can the farmer nourish it with dews from heaven, and make the sun shine to ripen it?

A.

Q. You answer well; he cannot. The farmer tills the ground and sows the grain, but he can do no more. Who then is it that sends the rain in its season, and makes the summer's sun to shine, that it may ripen the fruits of the

earth, to fill our mouths with food, and our hearts with gladness?

A.

Q. It is to God then that we are indebted for the bread we eat; and do you not ask him for your daily bread?

A.

Q. Repeat the Lord's Prayer.

A.

Q. In what part of this prayer do you ask of God the food of which we have been speaking?

A.

Q. Are all sorts of food equally from God?

A.

Q. Have you not been fed every day of your life with food necessary to your support?

A.

Q. Has not God then been very good to you?

A.

Q. And do you not love God for his goodness?

A.

Q. Ought you not to thank him for having been so good to you?

A.

Q. But how can you show that you are grateful to God?

A.

Q. When your parents or friends are very kind to you, do you not feel a desire to please them?

A.

Q. Then, if you believe that God has been very good to you, will you not desire to please him?

A.

Q. Do you think that God, who is all goodness, can be pleased with you if you are naughty, and obstinate, and disobedient?

A.

Q. Is it then only by being a good

child that you can show your sense of God's goodness to you ?

A.

Q. If you really wish to show your gratitude to God, you will endeavour to please him, by being a good child. All who hear me will remember this;—If we love God for his goodness, our love to him will make us strive to be good, that we may please him.

A.

SECTION IV.

Clothing.

Questioner. Of what is that linen made?

Answer.

Q. Of yarn, spun by the wheel: but of what was the yarn made?

A.

Q. Do you know whether lint or flax (for it is the same thing) be a production of the earth, or an animal substance?

A.

Q. Very well. It does grow in the earth, and is beat out and combed by the lint-dressers, so as to be made fit for being spun upon the wheel. Can you now tell me if that stuff is made of lint?

A.

Q. Of what is it then made?

A.

Q. Of what is worsted yarn composed?

A.

Q. What is wool? Does wool grow in the earth like lint?

A.

Q. You have told me what wool is, and what lint is; now tell me distinctly which is the animal production, and which the vegetable production?

A.

Q. Of what is that calico made?

A.

Q. Is cotton an animal or vegetable production? If you do not know I will tell you.

A.

Q. Who buys the clothes you wear? who gives them to you?

A.

Q. Are you not very thankful to your friends for giving you clothes to keep you warm?

A.

Q. You ought indeed to be very grateful to the friends who take such kind care of you? But where do they get the clothing with which they provide you?

A.

Q. And who blesses them with the means? Would they have money to buy clothes for you were it not by the good providence of God?

A.

Q. You have told me that that stuff is made of worsted, spun from wool, and that wool grows on the backs of sheep : How do the sheep live ? what is their food ?

A.

Q. Who makes the grass to spring upon the mountains, for the subsistence of the flocks ?

A.

Q. Have you ever seen the young lambs sporting by the side of their dams, and looking so happy, though so helpless ?

A.

Q. Do you think that the little lambkins, when they first begin to eat, require young and tender grass ?

A.

Q. What then do you think of the goodness of God, who ordains, that at the very season when the little lambs

come forth, the young grass should shoot its tender sprouts that they may feed ?

A.

Q. Have you ever heard the bleating of a flock of sheep ?

A.

Q. Do you think you could know the voice of one sheep from that of another ?

A.

Q. Who then teaches the mother to know the bleat of her own lamb, and the lamb to know its own mother ?

A.

Q. It is God then that preserves the flocks from perishing : and is it not then to God that we are indebted for all that the flocks produce ?

A.

Q. The flax and the cotton grow in the fields, and are cultivated by the hands of man : but who made the earth in which they grow ?

A.

Q. Does the lint, when it grows up and ripens, produce seed? and is that seed fit to be again sown to produce another crop of lint?

A.

Q. Suppose that the farmer, after he has dressed his ground, were to sow it with sand or pebbles instead of lint-seed, do you think that the pebbles and the sand would spring up and grow like corn, or lint?

A.

Q. Can you tell me why we expect that the seeds should spring, and that the pebbles should not?

A.

Q. It is the nature of the seed to sprout on being placed in the earth; but who gave to the seed this nature?

A.

Q. Nature is then but another name for what is wrought and designed by Almighty God.

A.

Q. When you then hear it said that such and such things are the works of nature, do you clearly perceive and understand that the things spoken of are the works of God ?

A.

Q. Has God in mercy made such provision for our food and clothing; and can any one deserve to be called good who is unthankful for his mercies ?

A.

SECTION V.

Difference between Understanding and Instinct.

Questioner. Are you an animal; that is to say, a living creature ?

Answer.

Q. Are birds and fishes, and cats and dogs, also living creatures?

A.

Q. Birds can fly in the air, and fish swim in the sea, but dogs and cats live on the earth as you do: In what then do you differ from a cat or dog?

A.

Q. But in what respect, besides shape, do you differ from them? Do they not eat, and drink, and sleep, as well as you do?

A.

Q. Do dogs and cats like to be kindly treated, and love those who treat them kindly?

A.

Q. Do you not likewise like to be kindly treated, and love those who are good to you?

A.

Q. So far then, it seems, there is no difference between you and them. But

can dogs and cats speak? Have they the use of language?

A.

Q. Though they cannot speak as we do, they make sounds to be understood by one another; and can plainly signify when they are angry or pleased. What can you do more?

A.

Q. Do the grown up people who are now your teachers know more than you do? Are they wiser than you are at present?

A.

Q. Were they not once little children like you?

A.

Q. When they were children, did they know as much as they know now; or were they then like you, ignorant of almost every thing?

A.

Q. Was it merely by growing big

that they became wise? or was it by attending to instruction?

A.

Q. Though only a little child, you can understand what I say to you: do you think a kitten could thus understand me?

A.

Q. Besides the gift of speech, you have then another gift bestowed on you above what is enjoyed by other sorts of animals; for have you not the gift of understanding?

A.

Q. That you may perceive this point distinctly, tell me, if you were very cold and saw the fire likely to go out, and that pieces of coal, or turf, or of wood fit for burning, were within reach, could you not contrive to keep in the fire?

A.

Q. How would you effect your purpose?

A.

Q. Do not dogs seem in cold weather to like the warmth of a good fire?

A.

Q. Large dogs can carry very heavy things in their mouths; but could the wisest of dogs contrive to mend the fire by adding fuel to it?

A.

Q. To contrive requires thought. You then have a degree of thought which the wisest of dogs have not; but if you were left by a friend in a strange place, when you lost sight of that friend could you trace him out by smelling his footsteps, following his course, and turning where he had turned, until you discovered where he was?

A.

Q. When a dog loses his master he can do all this; and though he were to be blindfolded and led to a great distance, could return on his own steps,

though he never saw the road ; in this a dog can do more than any of us can do. Did he learn to do this (as we learn to do things) by attending to instruction ; or did he do it from nature ?

A.

Q. Did you ever see a bird's nest ?

A.

Q. Would it not be a long time before you could learn to form such a nest ; even though all the materials were placed within your reach ?

A.

Q. Who taught the little bird to make its nest so neatly ? Did it learn at a school ?

A.

Q. Every kind of bird builds its nest in the way that is common to its kind. A sparrow does not make its nest like the nest of a swallow, nor does the swallow build hers in the manner of the sparrow. Do you think that either of them could

learn to imitate what is done by the other?

A.

Q. But though you perhaps might never be able to build a nest so neatly as a little bird, are you not in many instances able to do what you see done by others?

A.

Q. Do you wish and expect to be able in a little time to do more than you yet can do?

A.

Q. Do you think that any bird or beast has the wish or expectation to be able to do more than it can do at present?

A.

Q. Does not this show that your nature is superior to theirs?

A.

Q. If you had no wish or desire to learn more than you have yet learned, do you think that by such indifference

you would give proof of the superiority of your nature?

A.

Q. It is the nature of cats to catch mice. When you see a little kitten at play, and observe how quickly it springs on whatever it can lay hold of, and toss it in its paws, do you think it is acting contrary to nature?

A.

Q. If you, who are by nature capable of improvement, do not wish and endeavour to improve, whether will the kitten or you be acting most agreeably to your respective natures?

A.

Q. You think you have more understanding than a kitten?

A.

Q. How do you show or prove that you have more understanding?

A.

Q. Can you learn much in a single day?

A.

Q. What is twice one?*

A.

Q. Monday and Tuesday make two days:—If you learn, then, something on Monday, and as much on Tuesday, how much wiser will you be on Tuesday night than you were on Monday morning?

A.

Q. Go on to learn as much more on Wednesday, which will make three days; how much wiser will you then be?

A.

Q. Add a fourth day, Thursday, and will you not then be four times as wise as you were on Monday morning?

A.

* In what follows, the pupils are supposed to have obtained some knowledge of numbers.

Q. Friday will make a fifth, Saturday a sixth day; so that by Saturday you will have advanced six degrees in learning. But will you not still have much to learn?

A.

Q. If you spend one whole day without learning any thing, will you then, on Saturday night, know six times more than you did on Monday morning?

A.

Q. See then the value of a single day. You have told me that human beings are distinguished from brutes, by having minds capable of improvement: Will any who desire to improve be happy at the end of a week to think that they have lost a day?

A.

SECTION VI.

Observation, directed to Objects of Nature.

Questioner. You have discovered that corn, when sown in the ground, springs up and produces more corn ; now, tell me, if you were to put a single grain (or pickle) of barley in the ground, what would you expect to spring from it ?

Answer.

Q. You then expect that it would produce corn of its own kind, and not of any other kind ?

A.

Q. Do shrubs and trees produce seed, each of its own kind ?

A.

Q. Yes. The largest tree that you ever saw in all your life was once wrap-

ped up in a seed very little larger than the tip of your finger. From the seed it sprouted up, like the buds of a small flower; then it grew to the size of a small twig; and, year after year, continued growing and growing, till it raised its stately head to meet the skies, and spread its mighty branches on every side. Who formed it of a nature thus to grow, and to increase in bulk from year to year?

A.

Q. Are all trees of one kind, or have you ever observed any difference in their forms, and in the shape and colour of their leaves?

A.

Q. Do you know at sight the difference between a fir-tree, an oak-tree, and an apple-tree?

A.

Q. Trees which, when cut down, supply the carpenter with wood, are called forest-trees. Trees which produce fruit

are called fruit-trees. The floor of the room is made of fir-wood: Whether is fir a forest-tree or a fruit-tree?

A.

Q. Of what kind is the apple-tree?

A.

Q. Is there any seed in the heart of an apple?

A.

Q. Has every seed in the apple a nice little chamber to itself, covered with a thin substance, which serves as a wall to separate the apartments, so as that one seed may not be injured by another?*

A.

Q. It seems, then, that nature has provided for the preservation of the seed of the apple?

* It will here be expedient to have an apple or orange to cut up before the pupils, in order to convince them of the truth of these remarks.

A.

Q. But does the part of the apple which we eat, and which we find so very good, tend also to protect the seed, and to afford it nourishment?

A.

Q. Yes. If the seeds were to be taken from the apple, and exposed to the air and to the cold, before they were quite ripe, they would be entirely spoiled. But might not the seeds have been preserved equally well in a substance not fit for eating?

A.

Q. Did God, in making every tree to bear seed after its kind; provide in his wisdom for the continuance of every sort of tree?

A.

Q. Did God in his goodness make the fruit which nourishes the seed afford, in many instances, a supply of wholesome and delicious food?

A.

Q. Have we not, then, even in the common productions of the earth, proofs of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator of all things?

A.

Q. Do you know that in some parts of the world the weather is always very warm, much warmer than on the hottest of our summer days?

A.

Q. Don't you think that people in such climates, oppressed as they must be by excessive heat, stand still in more need than we do of an abundant supply of refreshing fruit?

A.

Q. In our country, where it is never very warm, it requires care and pains to bring any fruit to perfection: But have you ever seen lemons and oranges, and other foreign fruits, which are sold in the shops?

A.

Q. In warmer climates, these, and various other fruits, grow naturally in the fields. Is it not happy for the inhabitants that they are there so plentiful?

A.

Q. Did the Creator of the world know that the people who were to live in such warm climates would stand particularly in need of fruit to quench their thirst and revive their spirits?

A.

Q. If, therefore, God ordained, that in those countries fruits of all kinds should grow in greater abundance than with us, what does it teach us to think of the wisdom and goodness of God, in having thus provided beforehand for the wants of his creatures?

A.

Q. But is it for human beings only that God has provided a supply of food and clothing?

A.

Q. In what manner are the birds of the air clothed? How are their bodies covered from the cold?

A.

Q. What clothing have the beasts?

A.

Q. Can animals of any kind live without food?

A.

Q. Are the birds and wild animals that live in the fields fed by the hands of men, or do they gather food for themselves?

A.

Q. Who directs them to choose the sort of food that is most proper for them? Who informs each little bird what seed or berry is fit for its nourishment, and what is not?

A.

Q. Who provides for every species what is necessary for its existence?

A.

Q. But has God enabled you to know what is good for you?

A.

Q. Birds and beasts are directed by the nature which God has given them. What name do we usually give to the sagacity which enables them to chuse what is good for them?

A.

Q. If God has not given you an equal portion of instinctive sagacity, has he bestowed on you nothing in its stead?

A.

Q. Are ripe cherries very good to eat?

A.

Q. Birds are as fond of cherries as any of us can be: But can a bird, after having pecked the pulp of a cherry, be made to observe the stone in which the kernel is enclosed, so as to perceive in it the means taken by the wisdom of Providence for securing the safety of the

kernel, which may afterwards become a cherry-tree?

A.

Q. Which, then, is best,—to have instinct to direct to food fit for the support of the body, or to have understanding capable of perceiving, in the works of God, the wisdom and goodness of the great Creator?

A.

Q. From the time that a little bird is able to use its wings, and to fly from the nest, it never improves in knowledge: But have not you learned much since you first began to walk?

A.

Q. How have you learned all that you already know? Was it by observing and listening to others?

A.

Q. Who provided for you such opportunities of instruction?

A.

Q. God has then not only given you understanding, but supplied you with the means of improving it: Does it stand still in need of farther improvement?

A.

Q. You have not, then, as yet acquired all the sense and all the knowledge which you think it will be necessary for you to have?

A.

Q. Suppose that you were to be now shut up apart from all society; do you think, that as you grew big your understanding would improve without farther instruction?

A.

Q. Do you then still stand in need of continued opportunities of improvement?

A.

Q. Who is alone able to provide for you the continuance of such opportunities?

A.

Q. Is it to the goodness and mercy of your heavenly Father that you are indebted for the friends and benefactors that have taught you all you know?

A.

Q. Are you thankful for his goodness?

A.

Q. How may you best shew your gratitude?

A.

SECTION VII.

Farther Consideration of Personal Endowments.

Questioner. Can you tell me how many fingers you have upon each hand?

Answer.

Q. What is this hard substance that I feel within? Is it bone?

A.

Q. How many pieces of bone are there in this thumb?

A.

Q. How many in each of these fingers?

A.

Q. By what means are these three pieces of bone in each finger so firmly joined one to the other?

A.

Q. Bend your fingers, and try whether these joints or hinges are not very firm.

A.

Q. With what are the bones immediately covered?

A.

Q. Can you see in some places the veins that carry the blood down to the very finger ends?

A.

Q. Would it give you pain to have these small veins laid open?

A.

Q. By what means are the flesh and blood covered and protected?

A.

Q. What is it that gives firmness to the ends of your fingers, and protects the skin from injury?

A.

Q. Can you turn the middle joint of your finger as you turn the joint of your wrist?

A.

Q. Had the joint of your wrist been made exactly like the joints of your fingers, would you ever have been able to play at ball?

A.

Q. Do you see any other advantage in being able to turn the hand upon the wrist?

A.

Q. Your hand seems then to have been formed for some particular purpose: What do you think it was intended for?

A.

Q. Did you ever take notice of the paw of a cat?

A.

Q. In what does the cat's paw differ from your hand?

A.

Q. The bones and joints of the cat's paw are formed as nicely as the bones and joints of your fingers. The cat has as much the use of its joints as you have of yours: But can it use them to the same purpose; or do they seem formed for a different purpose?

A.

Q. Is it the nature of cats to catch mice?

A.

Q. If, instead of being armed with

sharp claws, they had only nails such as we have, would it be an advantage to them, or otherwise?

A.

Q. Think again of the difference between the form of your hand and the paw of a cat; then tell me whether each were fitted for the same purpose, or for different purposes?

A.

Q. Were both formed by one wise and great Creator?

A.

Q. Does it then appear to you that God gave to every living creature the form best suited or adapted to its particular nature?

A.

Q. Our hands are evidently fitted for performing various sorts of work: Do those who employ their hands usefully, or those who never do any thing, best answer the design of their Creator, who

bestowed on them hands formed for use?

A.

Q. Have you ever known or heard of children who employed their hands in doing mischief or injury to others?

A.

Q. Was it, think you, to enable us to hurt or molest our fellow-creatures, that God bestowed upon us hands so admirably formed?

A.

Q. But perhaps the great and wise Creator of all things no longer sees or knows what is done in the world which he made: What is your notion of this?

A.

Q. If God sees us always, during every moment of our lives, he must see when we make an ill use of any of his gifts: Are our hands the gift of God?

A.

Q. Do you think that God can ap-

prove of our making an ill use of the hands which he has given us ?

A.

Q. Can you now do much that is useful ?

A.

Q. You have not then as yet attained the full use of your hands ?

A.

Q. Though you were never to do anything your hands would in time grow large and strong ; but, though increased in strength and size, if not accustomed to work, they would not be serviceable : What then must you now do, in order to prepare your hands for being fully serviceable to yourself and others ?

A.

Q. Describe to me the shape of your foot.

A.

Q. Have the animals that go on four legs feet of the same form as yours ?

A.

Q. What posture does the form of your feet enable you to assume?

A.

Q. Would such a form of foot be of any use to horses and cows?

A.

Q. But by the form of your feet you are not only enabled to stand erect, but to walk and run : Rise on tiptoe, and observe whether there be any joint in your foot that assists you in running and in walking.

A.

Q. Can you turn out your toes?

A.

Q. How are you enabled to do this?

A.

Q. Can your leg turn in the same manner on the knee-joint?

A.

Q. The joint at the knee and the joint at the ankle must then, it seems, be

somewhat different in their form or construction?

A.

Q. It is but little that any of you can at present comprehend of the nature of your frame; but, even in the few particulars that you are able to notice, you may see enough to give you some distant notion of the wisdom of Him who formed you. Do you know how many senses you have?

A.

Q. Can you see?

A.

Q. Well, you have then seeing; that is one sense. Can you hear?

A.

Q. Hearing is another sense. Can you feel what you touch?

A.

Q. Feeling or touch is a third sense. If you can smell, and taste, these are two other senses. Reckon them distinctly, and tell me how many there are in all?

A.

Q. Have you ever seen the inside of a watch or clock, with all its wheels in motion?

A.

Q. You are not yet wise enough to be made to understand the nature of such curious machinery, but you understand the effects: You know that these wheels are contrived so as to make the hands upon the dial-plate move, and point exactly to the hour of the day?

A.

Q. When you observe how punctually the hand of the clock points to the hour,

you are not so foolish as to suppose that it would thus go, if the workmanship within were destroyed or taken away?

A.

Q. Do the movements of the clock depend on the nature of the workmanship?

A.

Q. You are not yet capable of comprehending the wonderful and admirable structure or formation of the eye; but do you not think that it must be infinitely more nice and curious than that of the inside of a watch or clock?

A.

Q. Look straight forward,—then up, —and down,—to the right,—and to the left;—and then tell me whether your eyes are fixed so as to see only in one direction?

A.

Q. Do you derive great advantage

from this power of looking round you in all directions?

A.

Q. Did the great Creator provide for you this advantage when he ordained the form of the eye?

A.

Q. Are your eyes dry like the skin, or have they over them a certain portion of moisture?

A.

Q. Are your eyes ever filled with water, so as to overflow in drops?

A.

Q. What do you call those drops of water which fall from your eyes when you cry?

A.

Q. Do you see very clearly when your eyes are thus filled with water?

A.

Q. Neither could you see if your eyes were quite dry. It seems then neces-

sary that there should be some contrivance for wiping the eye, to disperse the tears, and keep it in a proper state of moisture: What is there about your eye that seems intended to answer this useful purpose of wiping it?

A.

Q. Have you ever had a mote in your eye?

A.

Q. Would the smallest grain of sand blown into the eye, not only hinder one to see, but occasion great pain?

A.

Q. Are your eyes, like the rest of your face, exposed to every shower of dust; or are you provided with the means of protecting them?

A.

Q. You wink hard when aware of the danger; but, were your eyelids not furnished with that little fringe at the edge, they could not afford to your eyes con-

stant and complete protection as they now do : What do you call that fringe which is so ornamental and so useful to the eyelid ?

A.

Q. Is the ear the organ of hearing ?

A.

Q. Do you suppose the frame or construction of the ear to be less wonderful than that of the eye ?

A.

Q. But do you see so much of the construction of the ear, as to enable you to form a notion of the parts within that are concealed from our observation ?

A.

Q. Why is the machinery of a watch enclosed within a case ? Is it because it is coarse and ugly, or because it is so very nice and delicate that it would suffer from exposure ?

A.

Q. Now, tell me why the machinery

of the ear is, in your opinion, concealed from our view?

A.

Q. True; it is indeed admirably fine and delicate. Nor are the organs by which you are enabled to feel, and to taste, and to smell, less wonderfully formed. Would you greatly feel the want of any of these senses?

A.

Q. They then contribute greatly to your happiness?

A.

Q. Who bestowed on you the blessings of sight and hearing, and the other senses?

A.

Q. But if the organs of all your five senses be very nicely and delicately formed, may they not be very easily injured?

A.

Q. You have lived some time, and yet

they seem to be all safe: by whom have they been preserved?

A.

Q. It seems then that you have, ever since you came into the world, been under the care and protection of God?

A.

Q. Does God, even to the present moment, still continue to protect you?

A.

Q. Do you naturally love them who are good to you?

A.

Q. When you walk upon your feet, when you use your hands and arms, is it from the goodness of God that you are thus happy in the enjoyment of such powers of motion?

A.

Q. Is God good to you, in enabling you to see and hear?

A.

Q. And do you love the Being who is so very good to you?

A.

Q. Will you think more of his goodness than you have ever thought of it before?

A.

Q. The more you think of it will you not love him the more?

A.

Q. Do children feel very joyful when running and skipping at their sports?

A.

Q. But does not a little kitten, when it frolics about at play, seem also to be very happy?

A.

Q. Does the kitten know to whose goodness it owes the power of being happy?

A.

Q. The kitten enjoys itself as much as

you do; in what then are you happier than the kitten?

A.

Q. Do birds and beasts see, and hear, and touch, and taste, and smell, as well as you?

A.

Q. The great Creator of all things has then, it seems, given to other animals beside man the nice and delicately formed organs of those different senses. But when birds and beasts open their eyes on the light of day, do they know who gave them the power of seeing what the light of day displays to view?

A.

Q. A dog is very grateful to the master who feeds him, and even cats, though not so sensible as dogs, shew a sense of gratitude to those who are kind to them. Were those thankful creatures capable of being made to understand that all they enjoy is from God, would they, do

you think, be grateful to him for his gifts?

A.

Q. Are you less capable of thankfulness than a cat or dog?

A.

Q. And do you know that it is from God you have received all that you have and enjoy?

A.

Q. What use do you make of this knowledge?

A.

SECTION VIII.

On the necessity of Notice or Observation.

Questioner. Has God, in giving you sight, bestowed on you a great blessing?

Answer.

Q. Are you very thankful to God for being able to see?

A.

Q. Do you think that God gave you sight in order that you might always see what was before your eyes?

A.

Q. But do you really always see all that is within reach of your sight?

A.

Q. Does it never happen, that though sitting within sight of the door, you do not perceive whether it is shut or open?

A.

Q. Does it never happen, that though sitting by the fire-side, you do not observe whether the hearth be clean or dirty; or whether the fire-irons be in their proper places?

A.

Q. Do you always, without being desired to notice, observe whether things

that ought to be laid in a straight line
are so or not?

A.

Q. When you do not perceive these
things, is it because they are not within
reach of your sight?

A.

Q. Do you at such times make use of
your eyes, or do you not?

A.

Q. If any of your companions were
to come before you with a fool's cap on
her head, do you think that you would
not immediately observe her dress?

A.

Q. It seems, then, that you do not
fail to see whatever by its strange ap-
pearance attracts your notice?

A.

Q. But did God bestow on you the
blessing of sight, for no other purpose
but that you might see such things as
strike your fancy?

A.

Q. Have you the power to see whatever you chuse to notice?

A.

Q. Is it by noticing useful things, or by noticing foolish things, that you will be most likely to improve in knowledge and in usefulness?

A.

Q. Have we in the glorious works of creation, in the sun, and moon, and stars, and in the earth and all that it produces, proofs of the wisdom, and goodness, and power of the great Creator?

A.

Q. Ought we then, or ought we not, to take notice of every object of nature which comes within reach of our observation?

A.

Q. When you take notice of the beauty of the sky above, or of ought that springs in the earth, and at the same time raise

your heart in thankfulness to the Creator, are you then making a good use of the blessing of sight?

A.

Q. But were you to take notice only of such things, would you ever learn to become useful to others?

A.

Q. Is it then necessary for you to learn to observe things of a lower order,—the things that are commonly around you?

A.

Q. Of two threads, one person sees at a glance which is the finest, while another, with sight equally good, sees no difference between them. Now, tell me to which of these two persons the blessing of sight is most truly useful?

A.

Q. Of two servants employed in such household work as necessarily soils the hands, one sees not that her hands are dirty, and even sees not the dirty marks

they make on the walls or doors, or whatever they touch, while the other no sooner soils her hands than she observes the circumstance, and touches nothing until they are restored to cleanliness. Now, tell me the cause of this difference between them; does one see better than the other?

A.

Q. Of two girls walking in the street, one shall see a horse or carriage coming up, and, while it is yet at a distance, shall move deliberately out of its way, while the other, not seeing its approach, walks on till it is quite close to her, and then, in fright, knows not which way to run, and is perhaps run over at the peril of her life: Is it not then happy for her who had acquired the habit of taking notice?

A.

Q. Do you hear my voice?

A.

Q. Do you hear the people who are talking in the next street as distinctly as you hear me?

A.

Q. You can then only hear at a certain distance?

A.

Q. Do you always notice what is said when those who speak are within reach of your hearing?

A.

Q. I believe so; you do not always notice. Now tell me, when it so happens that you do not notice what is said, is your hearing at such times of any use to you?

A.

Q. Have you it always in your power to notice?

A.

Q. It is then in your power to hear, or not to hear, as you give your mind to it?

A.

Q. If you only hear when you attend to what is said, to what sort of discourse ought you to attend or listen?

A.

Q. Do those who never willingly listen to any thing but nonsense, make a proper use of the gift of hearing?

A.

Q. Do those who willingly listen to bad words, or bad advice, show that they are thankful to God, who gave them ears to bear?

A.

Q. When you listen to the instructions of your parents and teachers, do you then

make that use of your hearing which is pleasing to God ?

A.

Q. And ought you not to endeavour to please him, who, in his goodness, has endowed you with so many precious gifts ?

A.

Q. Some of the little birds that fly in the air, and some of the four-footed animals that walk the earth, are more quick sighted than any of us ; but can they so take notice of what they see as to improve in usefulness ?

A.

Q. How are you in this respect superior to them ?

A.

Q. To take notice of what one sees, in order to become useful, is then a proof of understanding ?

A.

Q. If two branches of berries, one

white, the other black, were placed before you, and you were told that the white berries were poisonous, and the black ones wholesome, which would you chuse to eat?

A.

Q. But if the white berries looked very rich and ripe, might you not be tempted to taste them, though you were told that they would make you sick, and even make you die?

A.

Q. You have then, as you think, sense enough to chuse between good and evil?

A.

Q. But if you had not been told which of the sorts of berries was wholesome and which was poisonous, would you, *of your own self*, have known which to chuse?

A.

Q. Young beasts that graze in the fields learn from nature to avoid what is poisonous; but you, it seems, do not

learn this from nature; you have to learn it in another way: In what way, then, are you to obtain a knowledge of what is good for you?

A.

Q. Whether will he who carefully listens to advice and instruction, or he who never minds or notices what is said to him, be most apt to profit by the advice or admonition of his friends?

A.

Q. Were you ever warned of the danger of going too near the fire?

A.

Q. Have you ever heard of any child who, after having been instructed in the nature of the danger, has, nevertheless, gone so near the fire as to have its clothes set on blaze, by which it has been dreadfully burned?

A.

Q. When a child suffers great pain from such an accident, whether will it

be glad or sorry for not having minded
or attended to the warning?

A.

Q. Children are always told, that it
is dangerous to go very near the fire;
but do those who do not attend to this
admonition always suffer? Do they not
sometimes go very near the fire, and
escape unhurt?

A.

Q. Have those who do not suffer for
their disobedience any reason to think
themselves very wise for having disobey-
ed?

A.

Q. It is not then a proof of under-
standing, but of folly, in children to do
what they are forbidden to do?

A.

Q. Are dogs and cats fond of being
near the fire?

A.

Q. A well trained dog will not, however, venture in his master's presence to go upon the hearth : How is a dog thus trained to keep from that which he likes ? Is it by instructing him in the consequences ?

A.

Q. The poor dog could not understand his master's reasons, and therefore he is beat and threatened into obedience ;— while his master's eye is upon him he obeys through fear, but, when no one is in the room to see him, will he still keep away from the fire if he has a great inclination to go near it ?

A.

Q. The dog, poor creature, is not to blame, for he could not understand why he was forbid : but is this the case with children ?

A.

Q. Are children always able to under-

stand the reasons why they are desired to do this, or forbid to do that?

A.

Q. But are not children able to understand, that those who are better instructed than themselves must know many things of which they are as yet ignorant?

A.

Q. Are not children able to understand, that they depend upon instruction?

A.

Q. Whether then is it proper for children to do what they are forbid to do, because of not being able to understand why they are forbid; or is it right and proper that they should obey without murmuring, and attend to the instruction that is to make them wise hereafter?

A.

Q. If you make a good use of the understanding with which God has endow-

ed you, will you not then carefully avoid what you are desired to avoid as dangerous?

A.

SECTION IX.

On Labour and Design, shewing the necessity of Mental and Physical Exertions.

Questioner. Of what are the walls of this house, (or the walls of the church), built?

Answer.

Q. Of what are the partitions which separate one room from another commonly made?

A.

Q. Is there any difference between stone and brick?

A.

Q. Where do stones come from? How are they obtained?

A.

Q. Are bricks likewise quarried from the rock?

A.

Q. True: Bricks are made of earth hardened in the fire; but how is the earth dug up? is it by means of an implement called a spade?

A.

Q. Of what is the spade made?

A.

Q. Of what are the instruments made by which the stones are hewn from the rock, and cut and chiselled by the mason?

A.

Q. Trees are cut down by an axe: Of what are such axes made?

A.

Q. Are the saws by which the wood is cut into boards, and the other tools by

which it is formed to the carpenter's purposes, all likewise from iron?

A.

Q. Is iron a metal, or is it an earthy or a vegetable substance?

A.

Q. Is iron fit for being used, as stone is, on being taken out of the earth; or must it be prepared for use by the smith?

A.

Q. Is it always, for whatever purpose it is intended, equally well polished?

A.

Q. Of what is the fire-shovel made? And the fine needles used in nice needle-work, of what are they made?

A.

Q. You perceive then that iron may be wrought to an extraordinary degree of perfection. Is it by the labour of men's hands that it is made to answer so many useful purposes?

A.

Q. Have the materials of which our houses are built been laid up, as if in stores, for us from the foundation of the world?

A.

Q. But can the metals be taken from the mine, or the trees be cut down for wood, or the stones be quarried from the rock, or the bricks be prepared for use, without much labour?

A.

Q. Was it not in the power of him who made the world and all that it contains, to have formed the rocks into houses and comfortable dwellings?

A.

Q. If God had thought it good for man to live in idleness, would he thus have made him to depend for every comfort on his own exertions?

A.

Q. It seems then that idleness is not good for us in the sight of God, and that

he has in his wisdom ordained that we should depend for all our earthly comforts on the exertion of skill and industry?

A.

Q. Is skill in any art to be obtained at once, or is it acquired gradually by attending to instruction?

A.

Q. Do you see any proofs of contrivance, or design, in the building we are now in; or do you see only proof of the labour of men's hands?

A.

Q. Does contriving require thought? Could any thing useful be contrived without thinking?

A.

Q. Thinking is the labour of the mind: When a man sits down to contrive such a house as this, is it his body or his mind that labours?

A.

Q. Has God then intended and rendered it necessary for us that we should labour with the mind as well as with the body?

A.

Q. Brutes are strong, and many of them can be made to work; but can they be made to labour with their minds?

A.

Q. When you repeat words with your lips, without any attention to the meaning or sense of what you say, is it a part of your bodily frame, or is it your mind that is then at work?

A.

Q. Monkeys can chatter with their lips, and parrots can repeat words very distinctly; but has not God given you ability to do more than monkeys and parrots?

A.

Q. When you repeat what you have got by heart, without knowing or attend-

ing to the meaning, do you at that time make any use of the understanding in which you are superior to parrots and monkeys?

A.

Q. When you endeavour to understand, is it your mind that then labours?

A.

Q. Can you understand a lesson without attention?

A.

Q. But do you not find it necessary to pay attention to other things besides lessons?

A.

Q. When girls are very dirty and slovenly in their persons, is it because they have not hands to make themselves clean and neat?

A.

Q. Can the slovenly make use of their hands when they please?

A.

Q. Are those who are very dirty often found ready enough to use their hands in doing mischief?

A.

Q. But do neatness and cleanliness require attention?

A.

Q. Is attention a labour of the mind?

A.

Q. Have you now discovered the reason why some who have hands do nevertheless remain dirty and slovenly in their persons?

A.

Q. Of two women equally strong, one shall carry a basin full of water from one end of the house to the other without spilling a drop, while the other woman cannot carry the same basin full of water without spilling at every step: What is the reason of this difference?

A.

Q. Yes: One had been accustomed to pay attention to what she was doing, and the other had not. That is to say, one had learned to use her mind when she used her hands, while the other had only learned to use her hands and not her mind. Which of these two persons would first observe that the water had been spilled upon the floor?

A.

Q. Can then a house be kept neat and orderly without some labour of the mind?

A.

Q. Is it by practice and habit that we become able to make good use of our hands in various sorts of work?

A.

Q. How are we to render ourselves able to make constant use of our minds?

A.

Q. In learning to perform any sort of handy-work, are those who have been

early accustomed to employ their hands, or those whose hands have been seldom or never employed in work, most likely to succeed?

A.

Q. In order to be neat-handed, is it then necessary to begin to use one's hands as soon as possible?

A.

Q. But will those who can only work with their hands, without being able to observe, or to know whether they are working to any purpose, be as useful to themselves and others as those who are able both to contrive and to execute?

A.

Q. Are those then best off who can use their hands and their minds at the same time?

A.

Q. Do you think that this can easily be done by those who have never been

accustomed to pay attention to what they were doing?

A.

Q. It is then as necessary to begin by times to use the mind as to begin by times to use the hands. Those who have never learned to use their minds, will never do any sort of work thoroughly nor properly. Even in such trifling things as washing one's hands and sweeping the hearth, those who have never been accustomed to observe will be found deficient. Learn, therefore, whatever you do, to give attention to what you are about.

PART III.

*Examples of Questions calculated to lead
the Mind to form just Notions of the
Religious and Social Duties.*

SECTION I.

Treatment of the Inferior Animals.

Questioner. Do you like to feel happy?

Answer.

Q. Who has given you the spirit of enjoyment?

A.

Q. Yes: When you feel glad and happy it is God who gives you gladness. He delights to see all creatures happy, and if you are good will make you happy

forever. If God who makes you happy has given you power to make other creatures happy or miserable, how ought you to use that power?

A.

Q. Are you happy when in pain?

A.

Q. Do you think that birds and beasts feel pain as much as you do?

A.

Q. Can they be happy while in pain?

A.

Q. God has made happiness for every creature that lives. The very flies, who buzz about and sport in the sun-beam, enjoy themselves as you do in the hours of play: But if you torture them by tearing off their wings, will they then be happy?

A.

Q. Has God given them the power of enjoyment, in order to give you an opportunity of making them miserable?

A.

Q. Do not the birds in the air seem very happy creatures? How joyfully do they sing among the branches of the green trees! With what pleasure do they skim through the air, as they carry home the food they have gathered for their tender young! As they approach the nest, and hear the chirps of the little brood, their hearts beat with joy, and their little wings flutter with delight. But if, instead of hearing the voices of their little ones, they should, on returning to the nest, hear the loud clamours of wicked children, and behold their nest torn down, and their darling young expiring in the grasp of some mischievous boy, would they be any longer happy?

A.

Q. Who gave to little boys and girls the power of making those innocent creatures miserable?

A.

Q. But will God approve of their making such a use of the power he permits them to have over the weaker than themselves?

A.

Q. Are dogs and cats God's creatures?

A.

Q. Do they feel pleasure and pain?

A.

Q. Are they like you glad to eat when they are hungry, and to drink when they are thirsty; and are they grateful to those who treat them kindly?

A.

Q. But have not those who keep dogs power to starve, and kick, and beat them?

A.

Q. Does God, who is everywhere present, observe such conduct with pleasure or with displeasure?

A.

Q. Would the man who starves his dog like to be starved himself?

A.

Q. From whose bountiful goodness is it that he himself has bread to eat?

A.

Q. And is it a proper return that he makes to the goodness of God, when he starves or ill uses the creature over whom God has given him power?

A.

Q. Are not cats likewise God's creatures?

A.

Q. And are they not very useful to man?

A.

Q. Are the shape and motions of a cat ugly and disagreeable?

A.

Q. Is not the soft fur with which the cat is clothed very beautiful, stained, as it often is, with various dyes?

A.

Q. What sort of sound does a cat make when it is happy?

A.

Q. And is the purring of a cat disagreeable?

A.

Q. Does a good mind like, or dislike the sight of happiness?

A.

Q. Is it good, or is it wicked, to take pleasure in the misery of any living creature?

A.

Q. Can they then be good boys who take pleasure in chasing, and hurting, and killing cats?

A.

Q. Has not every creature the power of giving pain to those who are weaker than itself?

A.

Q. A dog can kill a cat; a cat can

kill rats and mice. The larger beasts of prey, such as lions and tigers, kill and devour all weaker animals that come within their reach; for God has been pleased to make this their nature: But has God given to these animals instinct, or has he given them understanding for the guide of their actions?

A.

Q. When a cat sees a little mouse, is it capable of thinking of the goodness of the Creator, in conferring, even on such little animals, the power of enjoyment?

A.

Q. When the cat pounces on its little prey, is it capable of reflecting on the pain it gives?

A.

Q. But are boys, like cats and tigers, guided by instinct, or has God endowed them with understanding?

A.

Q. Are they capable of perceiving the goodness of God, in having given to all living creatures the power of enjoyment?

A.

Q. Are they capable of forming a notion of the sufferings occasioned by the pain of blows and wounds; also of the sufferings of terror?

A.

Q. When they then, without any provocation, torture and destroy cats, or other animals, by what spirit are they impelled? Is it by the spirit of cruelty?

A.

Q. It is certainly cruel to take pleasure in inflicting pain. But it is from being vain of the power they have to frighten and molest such creatures, that boys are often led thoughtlessly to acts of cruelty: Now, has any one reason to be vain of the power he derives from his size or strength?

A.

Q. On whom does every human being depend for the preservation of activity, and strength, and every personal advantage?

A.

Q. Is it in gratitude to God, that those who are strong and active employ the power he has given them, in maiming, or hurting the creatures to whom he has given life and happiness?

A.

Q. But has not God given us power over the lives of the inferior animals?

A.

Q. Does this give us any right to torture them? Ought we not rather, in thankfulness to God, to be at great pains, when it is necessary to take life, to make the death of the animal as easy as possible?

A.

Q. God has given his permission that

animals may be killed for the use of man ; but then their lives must be taken from them without putting them to unnecessary torture. The butcher, whose trade it is to kill sheep and oxen, is not cruel, unless he takes pleasure in making them suffer pain : Now, tell me what it is to be cruel ?

A.

Q. Is it likely that any one would, at the very moment he was thinking of God's goodness to himself, be cruel to other creatures ?

A.

Q. In order then to avoid all cruelty, we must often think of the goodness of God to us, and to all other creatures : we must remember, that his mercies are over all his works, and that, as he has made every living creature to be happy while it lives, though he has given us power over the lives of the inferior ani-

mals, he has given us no right to make them miserable.

SECTION VII.

Social Affections.

Questioner. Has God Almighty shewn great goodness and mercy towards you, in blessing you with the friends by whom you have been cherished and protected?

Answer.

Q. Have not your friends been made the instruments of good to you?

A.

Q. Would you think it a great happiness if God should permit you to become the instrument of good to others?

A.

Q. To whom would you, in that case,

think yourself bound to do good? Would it not be to the friends with whom God has blessed you?

A.

Q. Are you sure that you would thankfully receive from God the power of doing good to them?

A.

Q. Do you think that any one does good to you who takes pains to contribute to your happiness?

A.

Q. Can a child, by constant obedience, and affectionate attention to those by whom it is cherished and protected, contribute to their happiness?

A.

Q. And has God not put it in your power to be obedient, and to be attentive, and affectionate?

A.

Q. You perceive then that God Almighty has already enabled you to be

the instrument of good to those who have done good to you: Do you ever rejoice to think of the power that has thus been given you?

A.

Q. But power has also been given you to become the instrument of evil to those who have done you good: Do you feel any wish to exercise that power?

A.

Q. You do not then desire to make your friends unhappy?

A.

Q. Are people made unhappy by vexation?

A.

Q. Are people made unhappy by disappointment?

A.

Q. Are people made unhappy by seeing their trouble and labour thrown away?

A.

Q. Do not children, by perverseness, and obstinacy, and ill temper, cause vexation to those who have the care of them?

A.

Q. As often then as you are perverse, or obstinate, or ill-humoured, you make use of the power with which you are entrusted; but do you not at such times make use of it to do evil?

A.

Q. Do not children, by not making use of their opportunities of improvement, occasion the unhappiness of disappointment to their friends?

A.

Q. As often then as you are idle or inattentive, do you not make use of your power to make your friends unhappy?

A.

Q. Do you consider those who labour for your improvement as your friends?

A.

Q. When you do not apply to learn what they are at pains to teach, do you not make them feel that their pains have been thrown away?

A.

Q. In all such instances, if such ever occur, do you not make yourself the instrument of evil to those whom God has made the instruments of good to you?

A.

Q. As God is ever present with us, must he not know in what manner we use the power he has given us?

A.

Q. Do the good approve of what is good, or do they approve of what is evil?

A.

Q. God is infinitely good. If he, therefore, has blessed us with friends and protectors, and put it in our power to take from their happiness, or to add to it, by our conduct, do you think he will

approve of our making an ill use of that power?

A.

Q. It is then the will of God that children should be always dutiful and affectionate to those whom he has made the instruments of good to them?

A.

Q. But have you no connexion in this life with any besides your parents and instructors? Have you neither brothers, nor sisters, nor companions, nor school-fellows?

A.

Q. Has God given you the power to increase or diminish their happiness?

A.

Q. Have they not the power to increase or diminish yours?

A.

Q. If any of them are quarrelsome and contentious, do they at such times make you happy?

A.

Q. Do those who quarrel and contend with you, make a good, or an ill use, of the power they possess?

A.

Q. In doing so they do very ill. But will their doing ill appear in the sight of God a sufficient excuse for you, if you keep up the quarrel?

A.

Q. Do you think that any one feels happy when ill-humoured?

A.

Q. Those who are cross with you are not then happy in being cross: But do you think that by being cross to them in return, you will restore to them the feeling of happiness?

A.

Q. If it is your duty to use your power to increase the happiness of those around you, ought you not to endeavour to re-

store them to the enjoyment of good temper and good will?

A.

Q. Is it likely, that by answering in anger you will restore them to temper?

A.

Q. If you kept in mind that God is ever present, would you then answer cross or peevish words with words equally cross and peevish?

A.

Q. But is God the less present with you for your being forgetful of his presence?

A.

Q. Do you not often do wrong?

A.

Q. Do you not often do what you ought not to do, and often leave undone what you ought to have done?

A.

Q. You have then, in the short course of your life, often offended God: But

has God therefore withdrawn his mercies from you?

A.

Q. Do you not feel and enjoy the continuance of his goodness?

A.

Q. It seems then, that notwithstanding your undeservings, God is still good and gracious to you : How does this teach you to act with regard to your fellow-creatures? Does it teach you to resent every little injury they may do to you?

A.

Q. If God is ever ready to grant forgiveness to us, do you think he will approve of our expressing great displeasure against such of our companions as offend us?

A.

Q. When any one behaves ill to us, will God approve of our behaving ill to them in return?

A.

Q. When we behave well to them who have behaved ill to us, do we then act agreeably to the will of God?

A.

Q. Has God put it in our power to behave well or ill as we please?

A.

Q. When do we make the proper use of this power?

A.

Q. Ought we not constantly to endeavour to behave to others in the manner which we believe will be approved by the God of mercy?

A.

Q. Do you think that God, who sees our hearts, will approve of our doing to others what we do not like that others should do to us?

A.

Q. Do you like to be treated rudely and unkindly by your companions?

A.

Q. If ever then you are rude or unkind to them, do you not then do what you do not like them to do to you?

A.

Q. Do you like any one to be niggardly, and selfish, and ungenerous in their dealings with you?

A.

Q. If ever you are selfish or ungenerous in dealing with others, do you in such instances do as you would be done by?

A.

Q. Do you like any one to judge harshly of your conduct, and to think worse of you than you deserve?

A.

Q. When you judge harshly of others is it not very possible that you may think worse of them than they deserve?

A.

Q. Do you in this instance do as you like others should do to you?

A.

Q. Do you like to have your faults spoken of, and dwelt upon by your companions in their conversation?

A.

Q. As often then as you speak of the faults of your companions, ought not your conscience to accuse you of then doing what you would by no means chuse others to do to you?

A.

Q. Is it possible that God, who knows all things, does not know when we do to others what we do not like that any should do to us?

A.

Q. Is it possible that our conduct in such instances can be approved by God?

A.

Q. Do you like to be treated with gentleness and good-nature?

A.

Q. When you are good-natured and gentle you then do as you would be done by, do you not?

A.

Q. When you stand in need of help do you like to be readily assisted?

A.

Q. When you readily and cheerfully lend your assistance to others, what do you then do?

A.

Q. When you happen to disoblige or offend any one, do you like to be fully and generously forgiven?

A.

Q. How then ought you to act when any one happens to offend or disoblige you?

A.

Q. Do you like to experience kind-

ness and good-will from all with whom you associate?

A.

Q. How then ought your heart to be disposed towards others?

A.

Q. Will not God, who sees the heart, approve of those who endeavour to cultivate in themselves the spirit of kindness and good-will?

A.

SECTION III.

Social Affections continued.

Questioner. Have your brothers, and sisters, and companions, and school-fellows, derived their being from Almighty God?

Answer.

Q. Have they all from their birth been objects of his goodness and mercy?

A.

Q. Does God continue to bless them by his heavenly kindness and protection?

A.

Q. Does the love of God extend to all his creatures?

A.

Q. Your companions then are objects of God's love?

A.

Q. Are you and they equally the children of one heavenly Father?

A.

Q. Is God equally good and merciful to all the children of his love?

A.

Q. Are not then all bound alike in gratitude to him who is the bountiful Giver of all good?

A.

Q. Can we better shew our gratitude

to God than by studying to obey his will?

A.

Q. Now, call to mind the goodness of God, and then tell me whether it can in your opinion be his will that we should hate or despise any who are the objects of his love and mercy?

A.

Q. If we hate any of our fellow-creatures, what conduct do we then pursue? Do we then pay respect to the will of God, and shew gratitude for his goodness?

A.

Q. If we despise and look down with contempt on any being who shares in the mercies, and is under the protection of God, can we expect to be approved by him who knows what passes in our hearts?

A.

Q. Do you think that you have any faults?

A.

Q. When you commit a fault, do you not hope, and wish, and pray to be forgiven by God for the fault which you have committed?

A.

Q. Would you not think it good and kind of a companion earnestly to desire that God would forgive you?

A.

Q. Does this teach you how you, on your part, ought to act with regard to a companion who is faulty?

A.

Q. When you do well, and are conscious of acting properly, do you like that your companions should give you credit for all the good you do?

A.

Q. Ought you not then to observe and acknowledge what is right and good

in the conduct of any of your companions?

A.

Q. When you obtain commendation or reward from your superiors, do you feel most obliged to the companions who rejoice with you, or to those who seem to begrudge your happiness?

A.

Q. What dispositions then ought you to have towards such of your companions as are preferred to honour? Ought you to rejoice in their success, or to begrudge it them?

A.

Q. Would you like to live in the world alone?

A.

Q. You then think it a great blessing to live in a world so full of people that you can never be out of the reach of society?

A.

Q. But would not this blessing be increased, by the certainty that all you meet will be well-disposed towards you?

A.

Q. Even while yet a child, would you not feel it a happiness to be certain that all your companions regarded you with kindness and affection?

A.

Q. Can you be certain of this?

A.

Q. But do not you know to a certainty what sort of disposition you cherish towards them?

A.

Q. Do you feel kind and affectionate to those who always treat you with affection and kindness?

A.

Q. Are your companions in this respect, think you, different from you?

A.

Q. In order to know how they feel in

general towards you, what then have you to do but to ask your own heart how you feel disposed generally to them ?

A.

Q. Ought brothers and sisters to love each other, and to live together in constant harmony ?

A.

Q. Do good parents approve of this affectionate conduct in their children towards each other ?

A.

Q. Who is the Father of us all ?

A.

Q. You, and your companions and school-fellows, are they members of the family of God ; and, as such, are you not bound to love each other, and to live in constant harmony ?

A.

SECTION IV.

Use and Abuse of the Gifts of God.

Questioner. Can you tell me the number of your senses?

Answer.

Q. Have you all those senses in perfection?

A.

Q. Do you acknowledge the goodness of God in having conferred on you such precious benefits?

A.

Q. Is the wisdom, and power, and goodness of the Creator, manifested in the formation of your body?

A.

Q. Are your hands formed to be useful?

A.

Q. But is it not by their hands that the wicked accomplish their wicked deeds?

A.

Q. We have it then in our power to employ our hands ill or well: But does not the Almighty see and observe our actions?

A.

Q. Do you think it possible that God can approve of our making a bad use of any of his gifts?

A.

Q. Can we do any thing bad without an abuse of the power which God has given us?

A.

Q. Are health and strength the gifts of God?

A.

Q. Have we it in our power to destroy

our health by carelessness, or by doing foolish things to please our fancy?

A.

Q. If we thus destroy our health, do we not in this instance abuse the gift of God?

A.

Q. May strength be usefully employed?

A.

Q. But does not great bodily strength put it in one's power to hurt, and harm, the weak and defenceless?

A.

Q. Has any one reason to boast of possessing strength?

A.

Q. Is it a proper use, or is it an abuse of the gift of strength, to employ it in vain and foolish feats, for the silly purpose of exciting wonder?

A.

Q. Do you consider sight as a very precious blessing?

A.

Q. Have you any power to improve the gift of sight to useful purposes?

A.

Q. May you not, by acquiring the habit of noticing and observing, render the gift of sight always useful?

A.

Q. But may you not, by only noticing such things as strike your fancy, or excite your admiration, become habitually unobserving of other things?

A.

Q. Do you use the gift of sight to good purpose, when you do not observe the things which it is your duty to observe?

A.

Q. Can such an abuse of the gift of sight be pleasing to your Creator?

A.

Q. Is not hearing the gift of God?

A.

Q. Do we hear to any purpose that to which we do not listen with attention?

A.

Q. Is it then in your power to abuse the gift of hearing, by listening with attention only to what is wicked or unprofitable?

A.

Q. Have you it not also in your power to improve the gift of hearing to good purpose, by listening with attention to what is profitable and instructive?

A.

Q. Whether do those who lend a willing ear to good advice, or those who lend a willing ear to nonsense, give best proof of their being mindful that hearing is the gift of God?

A.

Q. Has God bestowed on brute animals the power of speech?

A.

Q. Ought not then the gift of speech, which God has bestowed on us, to be considered as a distinguished blessing?

A.

Q. Did God bestow on us the gift of speech that we might be enabled to communicate our thoughts to each other?

A.

Q. Did God, by endowing us with speech, enable us to be useful to others, by giving them true and satisfactory information concerning what we know?

A.

Q. But have we not, by possessing speech, the power of deceiving others, by telling them we think what we do not think?

A.

Q. When any one asks us concerning what we have done, or said, or seen, or

heard, or known, have we it not in our power to conceal the truth, and to answer falsely?

A.

Q. Does God know all our thoughts and observe all our actions?

A.

Q. Do you think that God, in whom is the perfection of all truth and holiness, will approve of our making use, in any instance, of the gift of speech to deceive others?

A.

Q. Is it very grievous to be severely reprimanded or punished by those who are over us?

A.

Q. But is it not infinitely more grievous and terrible to be exposed to the wrath of God?

A.

Q. Is it not then great folly to incur

the anger of God, in order to escape the anger of man?

A.

Q. Are those who tell lies in excuse for their faults guilty of this folly?

A.

Q. Would it be absurd and ridiculous in you to tell me that your little arm is two yards long, while, by a glance of my eye, I must perceive its length?

A.

Q. And does not God see the thoughts of your heart as plainly as I see the length of your arm?

A.

Q. Is it not then an insult on the majesty of God to speak with an intention to deceive?

A.

Q. Do you truly think that you are bound in duty to shew gratitude to God for his goodness?

A.

Q. Has he put it in our power to manifest our dispositions by the use we make of his gifts?

A.

Q. Have we it in our power to use our speech in praising God for his mercies?

A.

Q. Is it not in our power by speech to entreat the continuance of his goodness, to implore his pardon for our sins, and to recommend ourselves and our friends to his divine protection?

A.

Q. But is it not in the power of wicked men to employ speech in uttering blasphemies against God, and in expressing contempt for his commandments?

A.

Q. Do not bad men often use the gift of speech to take the name of God in vain?

A.

Q. Is it not in our power, by speech,

to express gratitude to our benefactors,
and thankfulness to our instructors ?

A.

Q. Have we it not also in our power
to speak impertinently and uncivilly to
those to whom we owe duty and respect ?

A.

Q. May we not, by speaking words of
kindness, and by expressions full of gen-
tleness and good-will, contribute to the
preservation of peace and harmony among
those with whom we live ?

A.

Q. Have we it not also in our power,
by speech, to annoy, and vex, and tor-
ment those we live with ?

A.

Q. Can we by our tongues spread evil
reports of our neighbours, to the injury
of their characters ?

A.

Q. Can we, by speaking ill of one

neighbour to another, spread discord, and destroy peace?

A.

Q. There is yet another view of the uses of the gift of speech, which it is very proper for you to consider. Let me ask, then, whether we have it not in our power, by giving utterance to lively and cheerful thoughts, to increase the innocent pleasures of life?

A.

Q. When we feel animated by the spirit of joy, may we not by speech animate the spirits of others to equal cheerfulness?

A.

Q. Do we feel happy in the enjoyment of good spirits?

A.

Q. To whom are we indebted for the happiness we enjoy, in being thus formed capable of delight?

A.

Q. Can we better shew our gratitude for this blessing than in endeavouring to promote the happiness and enjoyment of others?

A.

Q. But can there be any happiness independent of the favour of God?

A.

Q. When we in our mirth annoy and disturb others, do we then make use of the blessing of good spirits in the way of which God approves?

A.

Q. Is it then necessary, in order to be truly happy, that our mirth should always be in its nature innocent and free of offence?

A.

Q. Are you now sensible that God has committed to you the power of making a good and proper use of the gifts he has so mercifully bestowed upon you?

A.

Q. Are you likewise sensible that he has given you power to make a bad use of them?

A.

Q. Do you believe that God will call you to account for the use you make of them, whether good or bad?

A.

Q. Do you think that any one, while bearing in mind that God knows their thoughts and beholds their actions, would at that very moment do or say what they knew to be wrong in his sight?

A.

Q. What is then the best preservative against doing wrong?

A.

Q. Whether will he who is thankful to God for all his gifts, or he who is not thankful, be most apt to make a proper use of those gifts?

A.

Q. Whether will the person who never

thinks of God's goodness, or him who thinks of it often, and almost continually, be most inclined to thankfulness?

A.

Q. What then ought you to do in order to incline your heart to thankfulness?

A.

SECTION V.

Of the Use and Abuse of the Capacity for receiving Instruction.

Questioner. Are you learning to read?

Answer.

Q. What is the good of learning to read?

A.

Q. What is the use of books?

A.

Q. You must think farther upon this subject: You hear what is said to you by those who instruct you and give you good advice?

A.

Q. But do you always remember every word you hear?

A.

Q. Should you not wish to remember it?

A.

Q. If every word of that which you wish to remember had been printed in a book, would they have been preserved in the book better than in your memory?

A.

Q. May there not be a great many copies of the same book?

A.

Q. Is it possible that a great number of people, in different parts of the world, may at this present moment be reading those numerous copies of the same book?

A.

Q. Could those people hear, from different parts of the world, the same voice? Do they now hear me speak?

A.

Q. Do books then extend to many those instructions which the voice could only convey to few?

A.

Q. Can those who have learned to read, read the instructions that are printed in a book over and over again?

A.

Q. If those who cannot read happen to forget what has been told them, so as not to be able to think of it, is not what has been told them the same as lost?

A.

Q. When those who can read happen to forget what they have read, have they a certain means of recalling it to their mind?

A.

Q. Do not all of us, and especially young people, stand in need of instruction?

A.

Q. But are people always beside those who are capable of instructing them?

A.

Q. When those who cannot read are alone, or have none near them that are capable of giving them instruction and advice, must they not be at a great loss?

A.

Q. Can those who have learned to read, and have good books to read, be ever thus destitute of advice and instruction?

A.

Q. Is it not then a great happiness to be able to read?

A.

Q. But were you to read the words of an unknown tongue, would you be the better or the wiser for reading them?

A.

Q. Is reading then of any farther use,
than as you understand what you read?

A.

Q. It is then a still greater happiness
to be able to understand than to be able
to read? Who gave you a mind capable
of understanding?

A.

Q. For what purpose did God bestow
on you the gift of understanding?

A.

Q. When you learn any thing of which
you were ignorant, are you then sensible
of the blessing you enjoy in being able
to understand?

A.

Q. And ought you not to be grateful
to God for that great blessing?

A.

Q. You acknowledge that your reason
is the gift of God?

A.

Q. Did God, in endowing you with understanding, intend that it should be useful to you?

A.

Q. When you speak or act without thinking, is your understanding at such times useful?

A.

Q. You have then power to use your understanding, and you have power not to use it?

A.

Q. If God designed that your understanding should be usefully employed, can he approve of your letting it remain useless?

A.

Q. Is it in your power to make such bad use of your understanding, as only to employ it in learning what is wicked and pernicious?

A.

Q. But would not this be a most glaring

ing abuse of reason, which is one of the prime gifts of God?

A.

Q. Do you imagine that you could escape punishment, were you thus to abuse the blessing of reason?

A.

Q. Has God endowed you with such capacity as enables you to learn to read and write?

A.

Q. Has God given you such power to learn, that you may every day of your life learn something which you did not know the day before?

A.

Q. Is it in your power every day to learn something that is good and useful; and is it likewise in your power every day to learn something that is bad or useless?

A.

Q. Whether is it when you learn

what is good, or when you learn what is bad, that you best employ the power to learn which God has given you?

A.

Q. When you learn to read you learn what is good: But when you are able to read, will you not then have it in your power to read what books you please?

A.

Q. What use ought you then to make of the power you have thus acquired?

A.

Q. Wise men have written many good books, full of useful knowledge, and these you may always read with advantage: But bad books and silly books have likewise been written. Now tell me, whether it is for the purpose of reading such bad and foolish books that you have been enabled to read?

A.

Q. Were you to read such books,

would you, in reading them, make a bad or a good use of the power of reading?

A.

Q. If you believe that God will punish those who abuse the gift of speech, do you think that he will permit those who abuse the higher gift of reason to go unpunished?

A.

Q. By making use of your understanding you have been able to form a proper answer to my last question: But how did you arrive at the notions you possess of the nature of God? Was it from your own mind, or was it from instruction?

A.

Q. Can any one, without instruction, arrive at the knowledge of what has happened in times past?

A.

Q. Could a child, merely by the use of his understanding, and without being informed or instructed, obtain a just no-

tion of the laws of the kingdom in which he lives?

A.

Q. Could a child who never heard of a king, form any just notion of the king's power and government?

A.

Q. How then, without instruction, could we form any just notion of the nature of God, or of our own nature?

A.

Q. The wisest of men could not, from his own understanding, form juster notions of Almighty God, than an infant forms of the king, and his laws and government. How then does it come to pass that so much knowledge of the nature of God has been obtained?

A.

Q. True: It is, as you say, from instruction. Have you been so well instructed as to know that God has given you all that you enjoy?

A.

Q. Do you believe that it is through the mercy of your heavenly Father that you have hitherto been provided with food and raiment, and all the necessaries of life?

A.

Q. Do you believe that it is God who has raised up for you the friends by whom you have been tenderly cherished and protected?

A.

Q. Do you believe that it is God who has put it in the hearts of your instructors to take an interest in your improvement?

A.

Q. And do you believe that God, who has been so good and gracious to you, is ever present with you?

A.

Q. If God were to send a messenger from heaven to tell you what you must

do to please him, would you not earnestly listen to his voice?

A.

Q. If this heavenly messenger were to inform you of things concerning which no human being could give you information, would you not attend to him with thankfulness?

A.

Q. If he were to instruct you in the weakness of your own sinful nature, would you not be glad to learn of him how you might obtain strength?

A.

Q. Suppose farther, that this divine instructor were to shew you ^{the} path that leads to everlasting life, and to bring you the certain assurance, that by keeping in it you would be made happy for ever and ever, would it not make your heart bound with joy and gratitude?

A.

Q. Now think a little while, and then

Q

tell me, whether God has not done this for you and for us all?

A.

Q. If God had not vouchsafed to reveal these things to us by his holy Word, we should all have been ignorant of them as the day we were born. These divine instructions have been recorded for our use: In what book have they been recorded or written?

A.

Q. Do you now perceive the great advantage of being able to read?

A.

Q. Can we make a better use of our understandings than in applying with diligence to study the truths which God has been graciously pleased to reveal?

A.

Q. Does it not increase your gratitude for having been taught to read, to think that you have thereby the power of read-

ing again and again, from day to day,
the instructions of divine wisdom?

A.

Q. Do you consider it a great blessing to have it thus in your power to become acquainted with the will of God?

A.

Q. But though you gain a knowledge of all that God has revealed and commanded, will that knowledge be of any use to you unless you believe in his promises and obey his commands?

A.

Q. If, after knowing the will of God, you do what he has forbidden, or leave undone what he has commanded you to do, will you not be guilty of an abuse of knowledge?

A.

Q. Is it then necessary, in order to profit by divine instruction, that you cherish in your heart a disposition to obey the will of God in all things?

A.

Q. If you find it to be the will of God that you should not only abstain from injuring others by word or deed, but that you should be humble and meek, kind and gentle, full of tenderness, and ever ready to do good; will you not be bound to keep your heart and mind thus disposed?

A.

Q. If you find that hatred, and malice, and pride, and vanity, and hypocrisy, and falsehood, and selfishness, are all directly contrary to the will of God, to what ought the knowledge of his will, with regard to those bad dispositions, to lead?

A.

Q. But you will probably never be competent to understand of yourself all that is written in the Bible for your instruction: Will you not then be thankful to have the parts which you cannot

understand explained to you by those who are wiser than yourself?

A.

Q. Are not the learned and pious men whom the good providence of God has raised up in his church as our teachers and instructors in religion, capable of explaining what you do not understand?

A.

Q. Ought you not then to listen to their instructions with thankfulness, and to apply with diligence to learn your catechism, and such other books as they may think proper for you to learn?

A.

Q. Is wisdom a grace or favour of which God has the disposal?

A.

Q. If God has promised to give grace to those who ask it, what ought you to do in order to obtain an increase of true wisdom?

A.

